

Giovanni Maciocia



Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine

SECOND EDITION

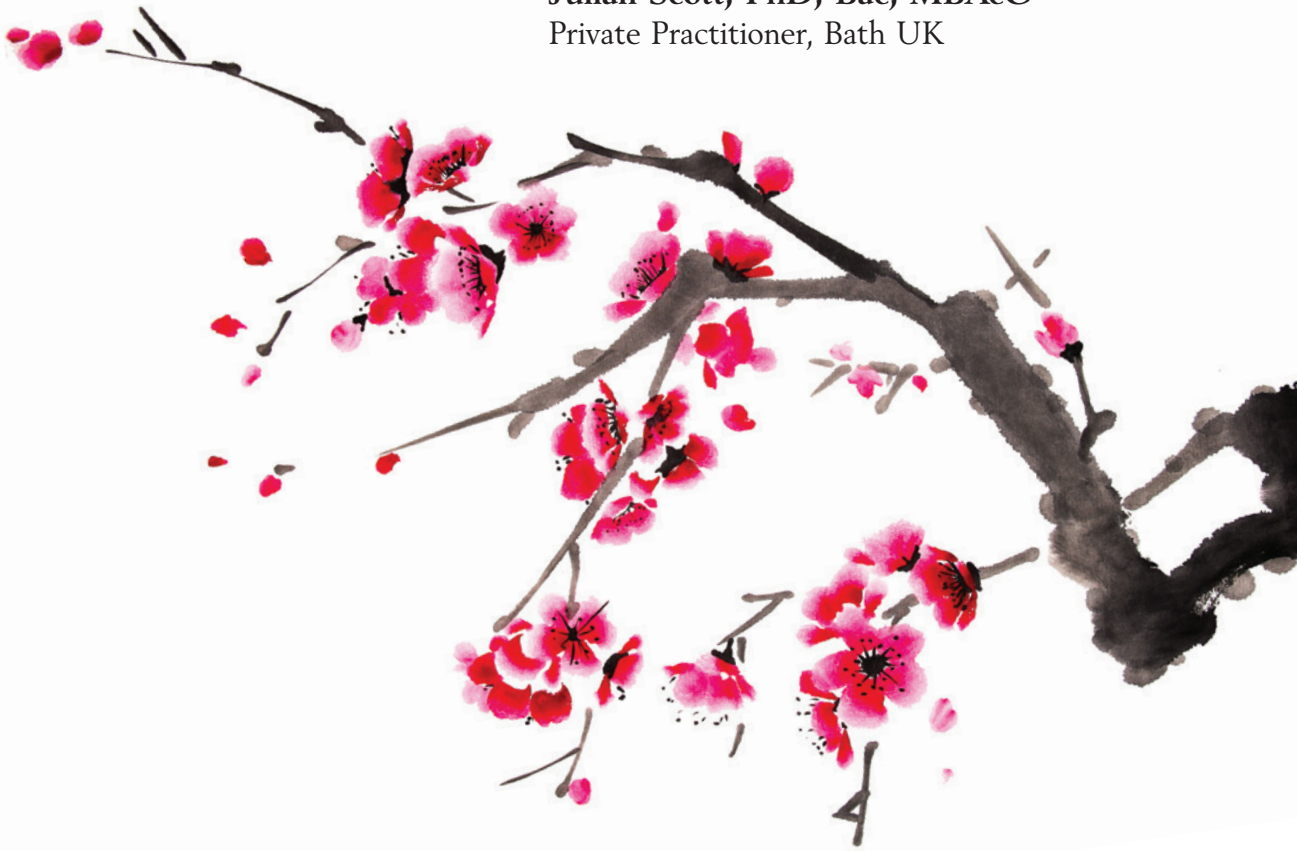
A Comprehensive Guide

ELSEVIER

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Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine

A Comprehensive Guide

ELSEVIER

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DIAGNOSIS IN CHINESE MEDICINE: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE,
SECOND EDITION

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Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to write a foreword to this book, the latest in the series on the fundamentals of Chinese medicine. It follows the same high standard that we have come to expect. Here we see the principles of diagnosis presented clearly in relation to the differentiation of syndromes, one of the great theories of Chinese medicine.

Mr Maciocia was the first to attempt any book in the English language on diagnosis, with his excellent book on tongue diagnosis. That still remains the best textbook on the subject. Now he has succeeded in writing a more complete book on the whole subject. Presented for the first time are all the little details observable in clinic, which, when put together, form a complete whole. Some of this information comes from his tireless translation of Chinese texts, which are inaccessible to most Western practitioners, and part comes from his clinical experience with patients in the West. This makes the book all the more valuable, as the lifestyle in the West is so different from the Chinese lifestyle, that many of the clinical signs point in a different direction.

The practice of medicine is about relieving suffering. Human nature is complex, and so the diseases and ailments which cause this suffering are also complex. When trying to unravel complexities of this nature, one needs a frame of reference on which to base understanding. The basis for understanding them is a philosophy which helps to understand life and how people come to suffer in the first place. One of the glories of Chinese medicine is its foundation in a rich and holistic philosophy which incorporates all of human experience. Above all, it is a philosophy that recognizes the vast complexity of human nature. At its heart is the Yin-Yang theory, together with the theory of Five Transformations. But this is only the foundation. There are a multitude of other theories built on this—the theory of penetration by Cold, the theory of Warm Diseases, and the theory of tonifying the Earth, to name but a few. At times some of these theories seem mutually incompatible.

In Chinese science and medicine, it is rare for a new theory to lead to the total abandonment of an old one.

There is the feeling that if the ancestors said something and took the trouble to write it down, then it must contain truths worthy of study. Out of respect for the ancestors, any new theory is grafted onto the old one. It is understood that there is no theory that is sufficiently complete to explain all of human behaviour. The human mind is too small, and the complexity of life is too great. When there are two theories that do not seem to fit with each other, this is not seen as a problem. There will be one theory that explains one situation, while there is another that explains a different one. This is a problem for the beginner in Chinese medicine, particularly one like myself who was brought up in the Western scientific tradition. At times, when learning Chinese medicine, it seemed as though one had to heed the advice of the Red Queen, to 'believe three impossible things before breakfast.' When one learns more, it slowly becomes clear that all theories have their application and it is the context that is all-important.

Apparent inconsistencies of this nature are rare in Western science. The reason is that there is an unstated assumption that modern theories are good and are an improvement on old theories. Therefore, the old theories are abandoned and with it any danger of inconsistency. In medicine, the modern theories, based on microscopic observations of bacteria, viruses, and genes, have superseded the old humoral theories, and relegated them to history. Unfortunately, this process means that a lot that is valuable is thrown out at the same time. Although the theories of Hot and Cold permeate all other medical systems, and give a valuable indication of what medicine to prescribe, based on what the patient actually experiences, these phenomenological theories have been totally abandoned in favour of objective material tests. Subjective feelings, such as the patient's will to live, have little place in modern Western medicine.

By contrast, in Chinese medicine, the role of the mind and consciousness is considered of great importance. In the very first term, the student of TCM learns that 'the Heart houses the Shen'. From the outset it is stated that there is a consciousness which is related to the

body. It is implicit that the consciousness influences the body and vice versa. Right from the very start there is this recognition that human beings are more than mere walking lumps of flesh. All of life—movement, feelings, behaviour and physical body—are governed by the laws of Yin and Yang. They are in constant motion, constantly varying.

It is quite natural that one should have feelings of anger, compassion and anguish. Illness occurs when these get out of balance. Likewise, hot and cold, dry and damp are constantly varying. Thus, the art of diagnosis in traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is much more subtle. Not only does it involve assessing the state of the physical body, but it also involves assessing the emotional state, and the whole state of a person's life.

Diagnosis is based on the idea that there must be a fundamental imbalance in Yin and Yang for illness to occur and that this imbalance will manifest in all areas of human experience. For example, the patient will show an imbalance in colour, movement, texture of skin, food preferences, music, clothes, sports, or styles of painting. On the body, the channels, the Elements, the Blood, and the whole way that Qi flows will be influenced by the imbalance.

This difference in the philosophical basis is evident when it comes to diagnosis. The philosophical basis for Western medicine is strongly biased towards the material basis of life, and diagnosis leans heavily in this direction. A diagnosis now depends more on tests than on the observation skills of the physician. The bacteria which are causing disease, or the part of the body that is dysfunctional, are considered to be the cause of the disease. For most physicians the emotional life of the patient is of negligible importance. Even less important would be their favourite colours. In Chinese medicine, the material components of the body are important, but so also is the emotional state of patients. Just as important is the spirit of patients and their Qi. The will to live is every bit as important as the microscopic components of the illness. When treating a stomach ulcer due to Liver invading the Stomach, the emotions have to be considered. The degree of inflexibility of a patient's anger is every bit as important as the size of the ulcer in assessing treatment and outcome.

'Western medicine is difficult to learn, but easy to practise. Chinese medicine is easy to learn, but difficult to practise.' These are the words of our late teacher, Dr J. F. Shen. At first sight, Chinese medicine seems very easy. There is not all that much to learn (by comparison

with orthodox medicine). Although the present book is large, it contains almost all that can be said about diagnosis. The equivalent books in orthodox medicine might fill a whole shelf. However, one should not judge the richness of the medicine by a word count, for each word is part of a 'pith instruction', a sentence that contains a wealth of meaning, and needs to be interpreted by one who is experienced in the art. The instructions on diagnosis are short sentences to point the way, rather than give a detailed instruction.

Diagnosis, which means knowing, or understanding, a patient, is the heart of medicine. Once knowledge about the patient and the patient's illness has been gathered and understood, then the nature of the illness and its likely course are known. The principles of treatment become clear and the progress of the illness predictable. But without a clear understanding of the patient and the condition being treated, the practitioner is fumbling in the dark. Treatment is haphazard and cure uncertain. Chinese medicine, although difficult to practise, comes to a more certain and more complete diagnosis, one which incorporates all aspects of a patient's life, and so comes to a more reliable treatment than Western medicine.

We are now living in a time of rapid change. The world of the 21st century is very different from the world that the author was born into. But human nature remains the same. People still have likes and dislikes, loves and hates, pleasures and pain. They still have to experience the constant fluctuations of Yin and Yang. They still have to witness their greatest pleasure turning into the source of their greatest pain. And all of this is built into the fabric of Chinese medicine. So, although society and lifestyle appear to change, Chinese medicine is still as relevant today as it has ever been. It still provides the basic framework for understanding people and their illness. Thus, the art of diagnosis in Chinese medicine becomes richer and richer the more it is practised. The pith instructions in this book seem to become richer and more meaningful the longer they are used and the wider their field of application.

It is said in the *Nei Jing* that the superior doctor can predict disease before it occurs, the average doctor can diagnose disease when it is present, and the inferior doctor cannot even diagnose accurately when it has occurred. With this book, it will now be possible for more TCM practitioners to become superior.

**Julian Scott
2004**

Preface

This book on diagnosis in Chinese medicine complements my previous books on the basic theory of Chinese medicine (*Foundations of Chinese Medicine*), the application of this theory to the treatment of diseases (*Practice of Chinese Medicine*), tongue diagnosis (*Tongue Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine*), gynaecology (*Gynaecology in Chinese Medicine*), the treatment of mental-emotional problems (*The Psyche in Chinese Medicine*) and the channels (*The Channels of Acupuncture*).

The longer I practise, the more I appreciate the importance of diagnosis to Chinese medicine in particular and to medicine in general. Indeed, one could say that the value of Chinese medicine lies not in its theories of Yin-Yang, Five Elements, Eight Principles, etc., but in diagnosis itself. Chinese medicine diagnosis is so valuable because it starts firmly from the careful *examination* of the patient; this forms the basis of diagnosis in any type of medicine from any cultural background, including modern Western medicine.

Although it is not often appreciated, modern Western medicine used to be based on a careful examination of the patient, before technology and modern diagnostic aids took precedence over it. Technological tests have replaced a proper examination of the patient; this is the weakest link of Western medicine and it is also the reason why Chinese medicine, with its careful examination of the patient, appeals to many thousands of medical doctors all over the world.

An example from my practice is particularly apt to illustrate this point. A patient came to me for a one-off consultation (as she lived in the United States) about a persistent hip and back pain. She was 78 and had been suffering from severe pain in the lower back radiating towards the right hip for 4 years. She went to see one of the top neurosurgeons in the United States, who ordered a scan; purely on the basis of this and without a proper examination, he diagnosed a problem with the intervertebral spaces in the lumbar spine. He did not recommend an operation, and the patient went on to

suffer for another 2 years. She had been very active in her mid-70s, playing tennis three times a week, but now she could hardly walk.

When I examined her, the first thing I noticed was that she walked with a limp, her body oscillating sideways. I have no osteopathic skills, but I have observed over the years that people with a chronic back problem tend to walk slightly leaning forwards; her walk was quite different and, in my experience, was related to a hip problem rather than one in the back. I took a detailed history and then asked her to lie down on the couch. I did the straight-leg lifting test, that is, lifting her right leg with a straight knee; this elicited no pain in the back. I then abducted her right leg, and this produced an intense pain in the hip. Everything pointed to a hip rather than a lower back problem. I was still very hesitant to question the diagnosis of an eminent neurosurgeon. I therefore rang a colleague in Italy who is an extremely skilled and knowledgeable osteopath and, while on the phone, he asked me to make the patient perform three other movements for diagnostic purposes. To my astonishment, he confirmed that the patient definitely suffered from a hip rather than lower back pathological condition. I asked her to have an X-ray of the hip (which had not been ordered by her neurosurgeon) as soon as she went back to the United States. This she did, and the X-ray showed that her right hip was completely and totally invaded by very severe osteoarthritis. She had a hip replacement, her pain has completely disappeared and she is back on the tennis court.

I report this case history as a glaring illustration of how the proper examination of the patient (including a careful case-history taking) has been forgotten in Western medicine in favour of technological tests. Of course, such tests are important, but they must follow and be guided by a proper examination of the patient.

Another example of the power of diagnosis in Chinese medicine springs to mind with a patient I saw a few months ago. She was a 29-year-old woman who came

with a severe pain in the back, lethargy and sickness, which had been diagnosed by her general practitioner (GP) as a kidney infection. She had been taking antibiotics for a week, which had made no apparent difference to the symptoms. After questioning the patient, it transpired that the pain, which was indeed in the area of the left kidney, was related to movement and worse on breathing in, and she had no fever (in fact she felt quite cold) and no urinary symptoms. Her pulse and tongue were unremarkable, other than the fact that the Liver and Gall-Bladder positions were Wiry and slightly Tight. The Kidney and Bladder pulse felt quite healthy, and there was no sticky-yellow coating on the root of the tongue.

On the basis of this, I felt that the GP's diagnosis of a kidney infection was unlikely to be correct and that the pain was more likely to come from a problem with the ribs (which is why the Liver and Gall-Bladder position on the pulse was affected); the aggravation of the pain on breathing strongly pointed to a rib problem, as a backache from a urinary infection would be not be affected by breathing. I treated her accordingly, and the pain immediately improved. An osteopath later confirmed that, in fact, the twelfth rib was displaced and that it was this which had been causing the pain.

This case history is another illustration of the importance of a proper *examination* of the patient (which the previously mentioned GP had omitted to do); this is the real strength of Chinese diagnosis and Chinese medicine in general. The strength of Chinese medicine diagnosis is precisely in the incredibly detailed examination of the patient approached from the four viewpoints of observation, interrogation, palpation and hearing/smelling. In my opinion this is also an important reason so many Western doctors are attracted to Chinese medicine.

Chinese medicine diagnosis is also strong in its holistic view of the body and mind. Probably no other form of diagnosis can make such a comprehensive, holistic and detailed assessment of a patient in a relatively short time, pulling all the different strands of diagnosis together. For example, as soon as a patient comes in, the practitioner of Chinese medicine exerts all his or her senses to their sharpest, observing the way the patient walks, his or her vitality, the strength of the voice, the lustre of the eyes and complexion, the shape of the face, the complexion colour, the smell of the body, the hair, the tongue and, finally, the pulse.

Another motivation for writing a book on diagnosis is that I think this is an area that has been neglected in

modern China. In their eagerness to 'modernize' Chinese medicine and make it more acceptable to the biomedical establishment in China and the West, modern Chinese doctors and teachers have tended to overlook the more subtle aspects of Chinese diagnosis, especially tongue and pulse diagnosis. Too often, in Chinese clinics, the clinical teacher will describe a pulse quality in a perfunctory way to *make* it agree with the clinical manifestations; if a patient has all the symptoms of Liver-Qi stagnation, the pulse is Wiry. This ignores the possibility that the pulse might be Choppy instead (indicating that the stagnation of Liver-Qi is secondary to a Liver-Blood deficiency). It is my wish that the more subtle aspects of Chinese diagnosis be preserved.

The book is divided into the traditional four major parts of Chinese diagnosis: diagnosis by observation ('to look'), interrogation ('to ask'), palpation ('to touch') and auscultation ('to hear and to smell'). In addition to these four major Parts, Part 5 covers Symptoms and Signs, Part 1 covers Observation deals with signs, Part 2 on Interrogation deals with symptoms, and Part 5 on Symptoms and Signs lists hundreds of different clinical manifestations (both symptoms and signs), irrespective of which category they fall into, and arranges them according to the part of the body they affect.

The separation between observation and interrogation is made purely for didactic purposes and does not correspond to clinical reality where what is seen on observation and what is elicited on interrogation occurs simultaneously and may be integrated automatically. For example, the separation between dry skin (a sign in observation) and itchy skin (a symptom in interrogation) is artificial and unrealistic. Another good example is that of oedema of the ankles; the observation of this sign is immediately integrated with palpation of the area and interrogation of the patient about it.

Moreover, the combination of both symptoms and signs for each area corresponds also to how we normally proceed with the patient. For example, when a patient comes in and his or her clinical manifestations are mainly concentrated in one area of the body, we would naturally investigate that area first by asking about symptoms and observing any outward signs without distinction between interrogation and observation. Supposing a patient complains about blurred vision, we would immediately and automatically observe the eyes to see if they are dry or blood-shot.

Part 6 lists the patterns of Chinese medicine according to the Internal Organs (Zangfu patterns). These are listed

primarily as a reference because Zangfu patterns are mentioned throughout the book.

It should be noted that the patterns listed in Part 5 on Symptoms and Signs have been adapted to each particular symptom and will not necessarily correspond to the patterns in Part 6. For example, the pattern of Liver-Blood deficiency under a particular eye symptom will contain symptoms and signs slightly different from those given in the general pattern of Liver-Blood deficiency in Part 6. Part 6 lists treatment with acupuncture and herbal medicine whenever appropriate.

An innovation of this second edition compared with the first is the addition of acupuncture treatments for many of the patterns listed in Part 5, Symptoms and Signs. For each symptom or sign, the most common patterns are listed first, classified into Full, Empty or Full/Empty patterns. Acupuncture treatment are given for these patterns. Less common patterns are grouped under 'Other Patterns'.

At the beginning of the book there is an index of all symptoms and signs contained in Part 5 with cross-references to Part 1 (Observation), Part 2 (Interrogation), Part 3 (Palpation) and Part 4 (Hearing and Smelling).

[Appendix 1](#) contains case histories with a particular diagnostic significance which are used to illustrate important principles of Chinese medicine theory. [Appendix 2](#) lists all the herbal formulae mentioned in Part 6 on Patterns. [Appendix 3](#) is a brief history of Chinese diagnosis.

Finally, in this second edition I have added a short appendix ([Appendix 4](#)) on a description of the main classics I consult when writing my books. This Appendix lists the main classics of Chinese medicine with my own view on them and an explanation of why I particularly value them.

Giovanni Maciocia
Santa Barbara, 2016

Acknowledgments

Many teachers have inspired my interest in diagnosis. I am indebted to the late Dr J. H. F. Shen for imparting to me some of his knowledge and skill in pulse diagnosis, which I have attempted to convey in this book.

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Note on the Translation of Chinese Terms

In my books, I have opted for translating all Chinese medical terms with the exception of 'Yin', 'Yang', 'Qi' and 'cun' (unit of measurement).

I also continued to use initial capitals for the terms which are specific to Chinese medicine. For example, 'Blood' indicates one of the vital substances of Chinese medicine, whereas 'blood' denotes the liquid flowing in the blood vessels; for example '*In Blood deficiency the menstrual blood may be pale*'. I use initial capitals also for all pulse qualities and for pathological colours and shapes of the tongue body.

This system has served readers of my books well. As most teachers (including myself) use Chinese terms when lecturing (e.g. *Yuan Qi* rather than 'Original Qi'), I have given each term in *pinyin* whenever it is introduced for the first time. One change I have introduced recently (as in the second and third editions of *Foundations of Chinese Medicine*) is to use the *pinyin* terms more often throughout the text and at least once in each chapter when the Chinese term is first introduced. I have done this to reduce the frequency with which the reader may need to consult the Glossary.

I made the choice of translating all Chinese terms (with the exceptions indicated previously) mostly for reasons of style. I think a well-written English text reads better than one peppered with Chinese terms in *pinyin*. Leaving all Chinese terms in *pinyin* is probably the easiest and most consistent option, but this is not ideal also because a single *pinyin* word can often have more than one meaning; for example, *jing* can mean 'channels', 'periods', 'Essence' or 'shock', and *shen* can mean 'Kidneys', 'Mind' or 'Spirit'.

I am conscious of the fact that there is no such thing as a 'right' translation of a Chinese medicine term, and my terminology is not proposed in this spirit; in fact, Chinese medicine terms are essentially impossible to translate. The greatest difficulty in translating Chinese terms is probably that a term has many facets and different meanings in different contexts; thus, it would

be impossible for one translation to be 'right' in every situation and every context.

For example, the term *jue* (厥) has many different meanings; a translation can illustrate only one aspect of a multi-faceted term. In fact, *jue* can mean a state of collapse with unconsciousness, coldness of hands and feet, or a critical situation of retention of urine. In other contexts it has other meanings; for example, *jue qi* (厥气), a condition of chaotic Qi; *jue xin tong* (厥心痛), a condition of violent chest pain with cold hands; and *jue yin zheng* (厥阴证), the Terminal-Yin pattern within the Six-Stage Identification of Patterns characterized by Heat above and Cold below.

Many sinologists concur that Chinese philosophical terms are essentially impossible to translate and that, the moment we translate them, we distort them with a world-view that is not Chinese. Ames is particularly clear about the intrinsic distortion of Chinese concepts when they are translated. He gives examples of Chinese terms that are distorted when translated, such as *Tian* 天 ('Heaven'), *You-Wu* 有无 ('Being' and 'Non-Being'), *Dao* 道 ('Way'), *Xing* 性 ('human nature'), *Ren* 仁 ('benevolence'), *Li* 理 ('Principle'), *Qi* 气 ('primal substance'), etc.¹

Ames is particularly forceful in rejecting a single, one-to-one translation of a Chinese term into a Western one in the introduction of his book *Focusing the Familiar* (a translation of the Confucian text *Zhong Yong*).² Ames says: 'Our Western languages are substance-oriented and are therefore most relevant to the descriptions of a world defined by discreteness, objectivity and permanence. Such languages are ill disposed to describe and interpret a world, such as that of the Chinese, that is primarily characterized by continuity, process and becoming.'³

Ames then gives some examples of what he considers to be serious mis-translations of Chinese philosophical terms. The important thing is that these are not 'mis-translations' because the terms are 'wrong' but because of the intrinsic difference between Chinese and Western thinking and therefore the inherent inability of

Western terms to convey Chinese philosophical ideas. Ames says: 'For example, "You" 有 and "Wu" 無 have often been uncritically rendered as "Being" and "Non-Being." Influential translators, until quite recently, have rendered "wu xing" 五行 as "Five Elements". "Xing" 性 is still most often translated as "nature". All these translations promote the fixed and univocal characterizations of objects or essences emergent from a language rooted in a substantialist perspective [our Western languages].'⁴

Ames stresses that the use of a 'substances language' (i.e. a Western language) to translate Chinese insights into a world of process and change has led to seriously inappropriate interpretations of the Chinese sensibility. Ames asserts that it is the very difference between Chinese and Western philosophy that makes translation of Chinese terms virtually impossible. He says: 'In the classical traditions of the West, being takes precedence over becoming and thus becoming is ultimately unreal. Whatever becomes is realized by achieving its end – that is, coming into being. In the Chinese world, becoming takes precedence over being. "Being" is interpreted as a transitory state marked by further transition.'⁵

Ames then says: 'The Chinese world is a phenomenal world of continuity, becoming and change. In such a world there is no final discreteness. Things cannot be understood as objects. Without this notion of objectivity, there can only be the flux of passing circumstances in which things dissolve into the flux and flow. A processive language precludes the assumption that objects serve as references of linguistic expressions. The precise referential language of denotation and description is to be replaced by a language of "deference" in which meanings both allude to and defer to one another in a shifting field of significance. A referential language [Western language] characterizes an event, object, or state of affairs through an act of naming meant to indicate a particular thing. On the other hand, the language of deference [Chinese] does not employ proper names simply as indicators of particular individuals or things, but invokes hints, suggestions, or allusions to indicate foci in a field of meanings.'⁶

As an example of this intrinsic impossibility of translating a Chinese philosophical term into a Western language, Ames then cites Steve Owen's reluctance in translating *shi* 诗 as 'poem'. Owen says: 'If we translate "shi" as "poem", it is merely for the sake of convenience. "Shi" is not a "poem"; "shi" is not a thing made in the same way one makes a bed, a painting or a shoe. A "shi" can be worked on, polished and crafted; but that has nothing to do with what a "hi" fundamentally "is" ... "Shi" is not

the "object" of its writer: it is the writer, the outside of an inside.'⁷

Ames gives various translations of *Li* [理] (a Confucian concept) as an example of how a multiplicity of terms may apply to a single Chinese term and how none of them is 'wrong'. He says that *Li* have been variously translated as 'ritual', 'rites', 'customs', 'etiquette', 'propriety', 'morals', 'rules of proper behaviour' and 'worship'. Ames says: 'Properly contextualized, each of these English terms can render *Li* on occasion. In classical Chinese, however, the character carries all of these meanings on every occasion of its use'.⁸ This confirms clearly how, by the very translation, we limit a Chinese term that is rich with multiple meanings to a single meaning in Chinese.

Ames says that in classical Chinese philosophical texts, allusive and connotatively rich language is more highly prized than clarity, precision and argumentative rigor. This rather dramatic contrast between Chinese and Western languages with respect to the issue of clarity presents the translator of Chinese philosophical texts with a peculiar burden.

For the Chinese, the opposite of clarity is not confusion, but something like *vagueness*. Vague ideas are really determinable in the sense that a *variety* of meanings are associated with them. Each Chinese term constitutes a field of meanings which may be focused by any of a number of its meanings. Ames says that in the translation of Chinese texts we must avoid what Whitehead called 'the Fallacy of the Perfect Dictionary'. By this, he means the assumption that there exists a complete semantic repository of terms of which we may adequately characterize the variety and depth of our experience and that, ideally, one may seek a one-to-one correspondence between word and meaning.

With this 'fallacy' in mind, Ames and Hall say: 'We challenge the wisdom and accuracy of proposing "one-to-one" equivalencies in translating terms from one language to another. We introduce the notion of "linguistic clustering" as an alternative strategy to "literal translation" that allows us to put the semantic value of a term first by parsing [describe grammatically] its range of meaning according to context, with the assumption that a range of meaning with a different configuration of emphasis is present on each appearance of the term.'⁹

These ideas could not be more apt to illustrate the problems in translating Chinese medicine terms. Of course we must strive for precision and consistency, but to think that there is a one-to-one, 'right' correspondence

between a Chinese medicine idea and a Western term is a misunderstanding of the very essence of Chinese medicine.

For example, to say that the only 'right' translation of *Chong Mai* is 'Thoroughfare Vessel' makes us fall into the trap of what Whitehead calls the 'Fallacy of the Perfect Dictionary'. Of course, *Chong Mai* can be translated as 'Thoroughfare Vessel', but that is only one of its meanings, and it is absolutely impossible for a single Western term to convey the richness of ideas behind the word *Chong Mai* (which I translate as 'Penetrating Vessel'); to think that we can reduce a rich Chinese medicine idea to a single, one-to-one term in a Western language reveals, in my opinion, a misunderstanding of the very essence of Chinese medicine. Therefore, my translation of *Chong Mai* as 'Penetrating Vessel' does not in any way infer that that is the 'correct' translation.

Ames makes this point very forcefully. He says: '*The Fallacy of the Perfect Dictionary is largely a consequence of our analytical bias towards univocity. We would suggest that this bias does not serve us well when approaching Chinese texts. Not only is there the continued possibility of novel experiences requiring appeal to novel terminologies, but also there is seldom, if ever, a simple, one-to-one translation of Chinese terms into Western languages. The allusiveness of the classical Chinese language is hardly conducive to univocal translations. We would contend that, in translating Chinese texts into Western languages, it is most unproductive to seek a single equivalent for a Chinese character. In fact, rather than trying to avoid ambiguity by a dogged use of formally stipulated terms, the translator might have to concede that characters often require a cluster of words to do justice to their range of meanings – all of which are suggested in any given rendering of the character. In fact, any attempt to employ univocal translations of Chinese terms justified by appeal to the criteria of clarity or univocity often reduces philosophical insight to nonsense and poetry to doggerel. Such an approach to translation serves only to numb Western readers to the provocative significance harboured within the richly vague and allusive language of the Chinese texts.*'¹⁰

As an example of the multiplicity of meanings of a Chinese term and therefore of the fact that it is perfectly legitimate to translate a single Chinese idea into more than one term according to different contexts, Ames says that he translates the term *zhong* ('centre' or 'central') in the title of the Confucian text sometimes as 'focus', sometimes as 'focusing' and other times as 'equilibrium'. Other times, he even translates it as 'centre' or 'impartiality'. He says strongly, '*The Chinese language*

is not logocentric. Words do not name essences. Rather, they indicate always-transitory processes and events. It is important therefore to stress the gerundative character of the language. The language of process is vague, allusive and suggestive.'¹¹

According to Ames, in the field of philosophy, two terms particularly stand out as being influenced by a Western thinking when translated, that is, '*Tian*' ('Heaven') and *Ren* ('benevolence'). Ames says: '*When we translate Tian as "Heaven", like it or not, we invoke in the Western reader a notion of transcendent creator Deity, along with the language of soul, sin and afterlife When we translate Ren as "benevolence", we psychologize and make altruistic a term which originally had a radically different range of sociological connotations. Being altruistic for example, implies being selfless in the service of others. But this "self-sacrifice" implicitly entails a notion of "self" which exists independently of others and that can be surrendered – a notion of self which we believe is alien to the world of the Analects [of Confucius]: indeed, such a reading [of the term "ren"] transforms what is fundamentally a strategy for self-realization into one of self-abnegation.*'¹²

With regard to Chinese medicine, the term *Xue* 血 ('Blood') is a good example of the previously mentioned problem reported by Ames. When we translate the word *Xue* as 'Blood' we immediately alter its essential character and give it a Western medical connotation; in fact, in Chinese medicine, *Xue* is itself actually a form of *Qi* and one that is closely bound with Nutritive *Qi* (*Ying Qi*). Indeed, the term *mai* 脉 appearing in the *Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine* is often ambiguous because it sometimes clearly refers to the acupuncture channels and other times to the blood vessels.

After highlighting the problems in translating Chinese terms, Ames confirms that a single Chinese term may have different meaning in different contexts. For example, the term *shen* 神 in some cases means 'human spirituality', in others it means 'divinity'.¹³ As he considers only the philosophical meanings of the word *shen*, we could actually add many others in the context of Chinese medicine, such as 'mind', 'spirit', 'lustre' (in the context of diagnosis).

Graham says: '*Every Western sinologist knows that there is no exact equivalent in his own language for such a word as ren 仁 or de 德, and that as long as he thinks of it as synonymous with "benevolence" or "virtue" he will impose Western preconceptions on the thought he is studying.*'¹⁴

Ames then surveys the options that are presented to a translator and seems to favour simply transliterating

the Chinese terms and leave them untranslated. He says: *'To some, this approach may appear to be simply the laziest way out of a difficult problem. But "ritual" has a narrowly circumscribed set of meanings in English, and Li an importantly different and less circumscribed set. Just as no Indological scholar would look for English equivalent for "karma", "dharma" and so on, perhaps it is time to do the same for classical Chinese, the homonymity of the language notwithstanding.'*¹⁵

Hall confirms that a single Chinese term may have a plurality of meanings. He says: *'The Chinese have traditionally affirmed as the ground of their intellectual and institutional harmony the recognition of the co-presence of a plurality of significances with which any given term might easily resonate.'*¹⁶

Finally, another sinologist, Yung Sik Kim, discusses the difficulty presented by the plurality of meanings of a single Chinese term. He says: *'I have adopted the policy of sticking to one English translation for a particular Chinese word whenever possible ... Of course, exceptions cannot be avoided altogether. I have had to resort to different translations for such characters as "xin" 心 which means both "heart" and "mind"; "tian" 天, both "heaven" and "sky".'*¹⁷

In another passage, Yung Sik Kim affirms that transliteration of a Chinese term with a plurality of meanings is the only alternative: *'The term "li" 理 is difficult to define. It is difficult even to translate because there is no single word in Western languages that covers all facets of what "li" meant to the traditional Chinese mind. The existence of many translations for the term, which often leaves transliteration as the only viable option, bespeaks the difficulty.'*¹⁸

Although a diversity of translation of Chinese terms may present its problems, these are easily overcome if an author explains the translation in a glossary and, most importantly, explains the meaning of a given Chinese term in its context (in our case, Chinese medicine).

In my books, I have chosen to translate all Chinese medicine terms rather than using *pinyin* purely for reasons of style as a sentence written half in English and half in *pinyin* is often awkward. Moreover, if we use *pinyin* terms in writing, it could be argued that we should be consistent and use *pinyin* terms for all Chinese medicine terms and this would not make for very clear reading. Consider the following sentence: *'To treat Pi-Yang Xu we adopt the zhi fa of bu pi and wen Yang'* ('To treat Spleen-Yang deficiency we adopt the treatment principle of tonifying the Spleen and warming Yang').

Moreover, the problem arises only in the written form as, in my experience, most lecturers in colleges throughout the Western world normally prefer using *pinyin* terms rather than their counterparts in English (or any other Western languages). Thus, a lecturer will refer to Kidney-Jing rather than 'Kidney-Essence'. Indeed, when I lecture, I generally use the *pinyin* terms rather than their English translation. Again, most lecturers use a pragmatic approach translating some terms into English (such as 'treatment principle' instead of 'zhi fa') and leaving others in *pinyin* such as 'Yuan Qi' or 'Chong Mai'.

When I lecture I always try to give the participants an idea of the meaning of a particular Chinese character and its significance and application in Chinese medicine. Indeed, the use of *pinyin* when lecturing renders Chinese medicine truly international as I can lecture in the Czech Republic and mention *Jing*, *Yang Qiao Mai*, *Wei Qi*, etc., knowing that I will be understood by everyone.

A diversity of translation of Chinese terms may even have a positive aspect as each author may highlight a particular facet of a Chinese term so that diversity actually enriches our understanding of Chinese medicine. If someone translates *Zong Qi* (宗气) as 'Initial Qi', for example, we learn something about that author's view and understanding of *Zong Qi*; the translation cannot be branded as 'wrong' (I translate this term as 'Gathering Qi'). In another example, if someone translates *Yang Qiao Mai* as 'Yang Motility Vessel', the translation captures one aspect of this vessel's nature; again, this could not be defined as wrong (I translate the name of this vessel as 'Yang Heel Vessel').

Trying to impose a standard, 'right' translation of Chinese medicine terms may lead to suppression of healthy debate; I therefore hope that readers will continue to benefit from the diversity of translation of Chinese medical terms and draw inspiration from the rich heritage of Chinese medicine that it represents.

I firmly believe that the future lies not in trying to establish a rigid, embalmed, fossilized, 'right' terminology based on single, one-to-one translations of Chinese ideas. Indeed, I believe this is a potentially dangerous trend as it would, in my opinion, lead students and practitioners away from the richness of Chinese language and richness of meanings of Chinese medicine ideas. The adoption of a standardized, 'approved' terminology of Chinese medical terms may indeed, in time, divorce students and practitioners from the essence of Chinese medicine. If

an 'official', standardized translation of Chinese terms took hold, students would be less inclined to study the Chinese terms to explore their meaning.

When I introduce a new Chinese medicine during my lectures, I always draw the Chinese character on the board and illustrate how the character reflects the nature of that particular term. I feel this is more important than imposing a 'right' translation of that term.

Ames and Hall make the same point: *'Such translations have been "legitimized" by their gradual insinuation into the standard Chinese-English dictionaries and glosses. By encouraging the uncritical assumption in those who consult these reference works that this formula of translations provides the student with a "literal" rendering of the terms, these lexicons have become complicit in an entrenched cultural equivocation that we strive to avoid.'*¹⁹

They then further make the point that using a one-to-one translation of Chinese terms ignores the cultural background of the origin of the terms: *'Our argument is that it is in fact these formulaic usages that are radical interpretations. To our mind, to consciously or unconsciously transplant a text from its own historical and intellectual soil and replant it in one that has decidedly different philosophical landscape is to take liberties with the text and is radical in the sense it tampers with its very roots.'*²⁰

As I said earlier, an 'official', standardized translation of Chinese terms may make students and practitioners less inclined to study the Chinese terms to explore their meaning with their own interpretation. Ames and Hall say: *'Our goal is not to replace one inadequate formula with another. Our translations are intended as no more than suggestive 'placeholders' that refer readers back to this glossary to negotiate their own meaning, and, we hope, to appropriate the Chinese terms for themselves.'*²¹

Moreover, imposing an 'approved' terminology in English betrays an Anglo-centric world view; to be consistent, we should then have an 'approved' terminology in every major language of the world. It seems to me much better to try and understand the spirit and the essence of Chinese medicine by studying its characters and their *clinical* significance and using *pinyin* transliteration whenever appropriate.

Trying to fossilize Chinese medicine terms into an imposed terminology goes against the very essence of the Chinese language which, as Ames says, is not logocentric and in which words do not name essences; rather, they indicate always-transitory processes and events. The language of process is vague, allusive and suggestive.

Because Chinese language is a language of *process*, the question arises also whether practising Chinese medicine actually helps the understanding of Chinese medical terminology; in my opinion, in many cases it does. For example, I think that clinical experience helps us understand the nature of the *Chong Mai* (Penetrating Vessel) and therefore helps us to understand the term *Chong* in a 'knowing practice' way (as Farquhar defines it)²² rather than a theoretical way.

Of course, a translator of Chinese books should strive for precision and consistency, but we must accept that there is a rich multiplicity of meanings for any give idea of Chinese medicine. The *Chong Mai* is a good example of this multiplicity as the term *Chong* could be translated as 'thoroughfare', 'strategic cross-roads', 'to penetrate', 'to rush', 'to rush upwards', 'to charge', 'to dash', 'activity', 'movement' and 'free passage'. Which of these translations is 'correct'? They are all correct as they all convey an idea of the nature and function of the *Chong Mai*.

I therefore think that the future of teaching Chinese medicine lies not in trying to impose the straight-jacket of a rigid terminology of the rich ideas of Chinese medicine, but in teaching students increasingly more Chinese characters and explaining the richness of meanings associated with them in the context of Chinese medicine. I myself, would not like my own terminology to be 'adopted' as the 'correct' or 'official' one; I would rather see colleges teaching increasingly more Chinese to their students by illustrating the rich meanings of Chinese medicine terms. As mentioned earlier, my main motive for translating all terms is purely for reasons of style in an English-language textbook; when I lecture I generally use *pinyin* terms, but, most of all, I show the students the Chinese characters and try to convey their meaning in the context of Chinese medicine.

Finally, I would like to explain my continued translation of *Wu Xing* as 'Five Elements'. The term 'Five Elements' has been used by most Western practitioners of Chinese medicine for a long time (also in French and other European languages). Some authors consider this to be a misunderstanding of the meaning of the Chinese term '*Wu Xing*', perpetuated over the years and it probably is. '*Wu*' means 'five' and '*Xing*' means 'movement', 'process', 'to go', 'conduct' or 'behaviour'. Most authors therefore think the word '*Xing*' cannot indicate 'element' as a basic constituent of Nature, as was supposedly intended in ancient Greek philosophy.

This is, in my opinion, only partly true as the elements, as they were conceived by various Greek philosophers over the centuries, were not always considered 'basic constituents' of Nature or 'passive motionless fundamental substances'.²³ Some Greek philosophers conceived the elements as dynamic qualities of Nature, in a way similar to Chinese philosophy.

For example, Aristotle gave a definite dynamic interpretation to the four elements and called them 'primary form' (*prota somata*). He said: '*Earth and Fire are opposites also due to the opposition of the respective qualities with which they are revealed to our senses: Fire is hot, Earth is cold. Besides the fundamental opposition of hot and cold, there is another one, i.e. that of dry and wet: hence the four possible combinations of hot-dry [Fire], hot-wet [Air], cold-dry [Earth] and cold-wet [Water] ... the elements can mix with each other and can even transform into one another ... thus Earth, which is cold and dry, can generate Water if wetness replaces dryness.*'²⁴

To Aristotle, therefore, the four elements became the four basic qualities of natural phenomena, classified as combinations of four qualities, hot, cold, dry and wet. As is apparent from the previously statement, the Aristotelian elements could even transform into one another and generate each other.

This interpretation is very similar to the Chinese one, in which the elements are qualities of Nature. Furthermore, it is interesting to note the similarity with the Chinese theory of Yin-Yang: the four Aristotelian elements derive from the interaction of the basic Yin-Yang qualities of cold-hot and dry-wet.

Thus, it is not entirely true to say that the Greek elements were conceived only as the basic constituents of matter, the 'building blocks' of Nature which would make the use of the word 'element' wrong to indicate *xing*. Furthermore, the word 'elements' does not necessarily imply that; it does so only in its modern chemical interpretation.

In conclusion, for the above reasons I have kept the word 'element' as a translation of the Chinese word '*xing*'. According to Wang, the term 'Five Elements' could be translate in a number of ways, such as 'agents', 'entities', 'goings', 'conduct', 'doings', 'forces', 'activities', and 'stages of change'.²⁵

Recently, the term 'Five Phases' is gaining acceptance, but some sinologists disagree with this translation and propose returning to 'Five Elements'. Friedrich and Lackner, for example, suggest restoring the term 'elements'.²⁶ Graham uses the term 'Five Processes'.²⁷

I would probably agree that 'processes' is the best translation of *Wu Xing*. In fact, the book 'Shang Shu' written during the Western Zhou dynasty (1000–771 BC) said: '*The Five Elements are Water, Fire, Wood, Metal and Earth. Water moistens downwards; Fire flares upwards; Wood can be bent and straightened; Metal can be moulded and can harden; Earth allows sowing, growing and reaping.*'²⁸

Some sinologists (e.g. Needham and Fung Yu Lan) still use the term 'element'. Fung Yu Lan suggests that a possible translation of *wu xing* could be 'Five Activities' or 'Five Agents'.²⁹ Although the term 'five phases' has gained some acceptance as a translation of '*wu xing*', I find this term restrictive as it clearly refers to only one aspect of the Five Elements, that is, phases of a (seasonal) cycle.

A glossary with *pinyin* terms, Chinese characters and English translation appears in the glossaries of my books. I include both a *Pinyin*-English and an English-*Pinyin* glossary.

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28. *Shang Shu* c 659 BC cited in 1975 *Practical Chinese Medicine* (*Shi Yong Zhong Yi Xue* 实用中医学), Beijing Publishing House, Beijing, p. 32. The book *Shang Shu* is placed by some in the early Zhou dynasty (hence c. 1000 BC), but the prevalent opinion is that it was written sometime between 659 BC and 627 BC.
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How to Use This Book

The book is articulated into six parts and four appendices as follows:

Part 1 – Observation
Part 2 – Interrogation
Part 3 – Palpation
Part 4 – Hearing and Smelling
Part 5 – Symptoms and Signs
Part 6 – Patterns
[Appendix 1](#) – Case histories
[Appendix 2](#) – Prescriptions
[Appendix 3](#) – History of Chinese diagnosis
[Appendix 4](#) – Chinese medicine classics
Glossary
Chinese dynasties

Part 1 on Observation discusses the diagnostic significance of *signs* by body area (e.g. head, face, eyes, ears, limbs, etc.). Part 2 on Interrogation describes the techniques used in asking questions about various parts of the body; this process of asking questions should elicit an account of *symptoms* from the patient.

Part 3 on Palpation includes pulse diagnosis and diagnosis from palpation of the abdomen and channels. Part 4 describes the diagnostic significance of sounds and smells. Thus *signs* are described in Part 1 on Observation and *symptoms* in

Part 2 on Interrogation.

Part 5 on Symptoms and Signs lists without discussion many symptoms and signs with their related patterns. I would like to stress that this part discusses the differentiation of patterns of *symptoms* and *signs* and *not* diseases. For example, the reader will find the differentiation of patterns for the symptoms of dizziness and nausea, but not that for Meniere's disease (which manifests with dizziness and nausea). This is because it is the role of a book on diagnosis to discuss symptoms and signs and that of a book on internal medicine to discuss diseases. This part is linked to Parts 1 and 2 in

so far as it lists clinical manifestations irrespective of whether they are symptoms or signs. See [Fig. F.1](#).

Please note that all the symptoms and signs described in Parts 1 and 2 are covered in Part 5 on Symptoms and Signs, but not vice versa; that is, this part may contain some less common symptoms and signs that are not in Parts 1 and 2.

All parts of the book contain boxes which link one part to another. For example, under the heading of 'Red eyes' in [Chapter 6](#) (Part 1, Observation), there is a box linking this sign to [Chapter 61](#) (Part 5, Symptoms and Signs); vice versa, in [Chapter 61](#) (Part 5, Symptoms and Signs) under the sign of 'red eyes', there is a box linking this sign to [Chapter 6](#) (Part 1, Observation). This should facilitate navigation between the different parts of the book for each particular symptom or sign. See [Fig. F.2](#).

There are three main ways to use this book, as follows:

1. The reader can read a particular chapter to gain an understanding of the diagnostic significance of a specific part of the body. For example, [Chapter 3](#) contains a detailed discussion of the diagnostic significance of the complexion colour, which is an extremely important aspect of diagnosis. Likewise [Chapter 49](#) in Part 3 contains a detailed discussion of the general principles of pulse diagnosis.
2. A second way to use the book is to 'dip' into it. If the reader is faced with a patient presenting with symptoms and signs that clearly revolve around a particular area of the body, he or she may dip into the sections that deal with that particular part of the body. For example, if a patient presents with blurred vision, dry eyes and eye ache, he or she can look up [Chapter 6](#) in Part 1, Observation, and [Chapter 42](#) in Part 2, Interrogation. [Fig. F.3](#) illustrates the main face areas with the relevant chapter numbers from Part 1 on Observation (Obs), Part 2 on Interrogation (Int) and Part 5 on Symptoms and Signs (S&S), while [Fig. F.4](#) does the same for body areas.

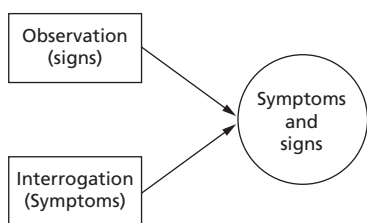


Fig. F.1 Links among observation, interrogation and symptoms and signs.



Fig. F.2 Links among parts for each symptom or sign.

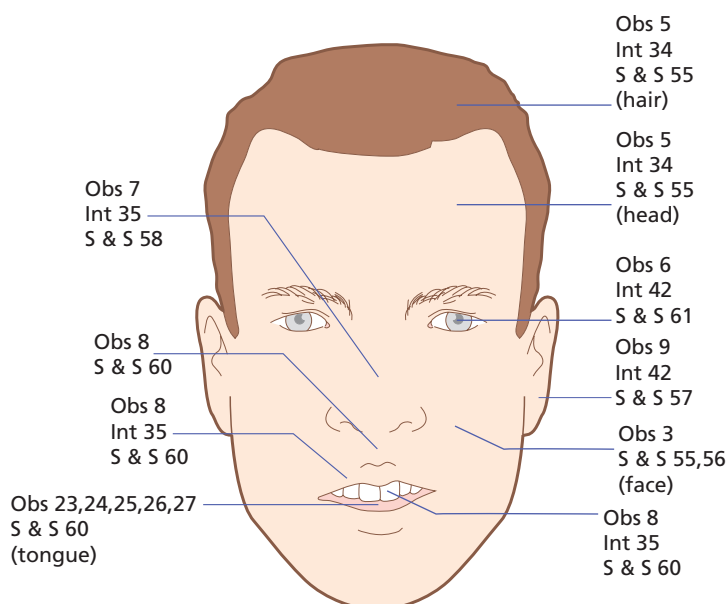


Fig. F.3 Map of face areas.

3. A third way to use the book is for the reader to look up a particular symptom or sign encountered in the clinic, especially if this is an uncommon one, such as sweating on one side of the body. The symptom or sign should be read about in all parts of the book in which it appears, for example, Parts 2 and 5 or Parts 1, 3 and 5. Each part may give slightly different information or, at least, information

from a different perspective about that symptom or sign.

HOW TO MOVE BETWEEN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BOOK

To facilitate the link between the different Parts of the book (Part 1, Observation; Part 2, Interrogation; Part

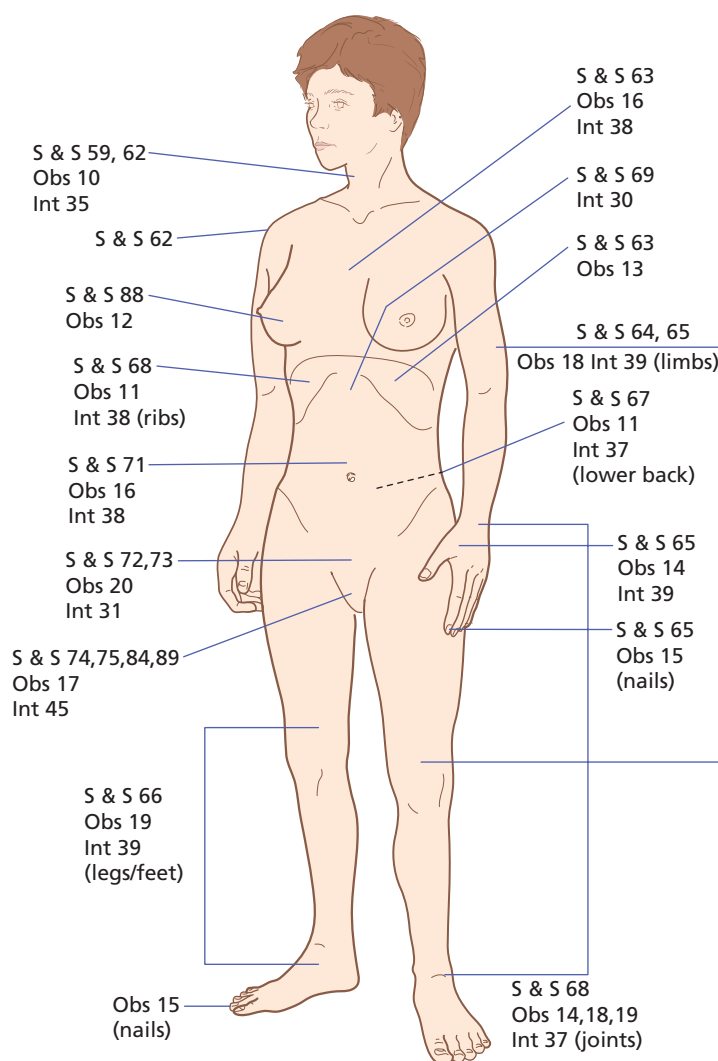


Fig. F.4 Map of body areas.

3, Palpation; and Part 4, Hearing/Smelling), there is a Symptoms Index at the beginning of the book. This lists each symptom that is in Part 5, Symptoms and Signs, and links it to the four parts on Observation (Part 1), Interrogation (Part 2), Palpation (Part 3) and Hearing/Smelling (Part 4). For example, on looking up 'dry

nostrils' ([Chapter 58](#) of Part 5, Symptoms and Signs), you will find that this symptom is also discussed in [Chapter 7](#) of Part 1, Observation, and 35 of Part 2, Interrogation. In addition, there is a box under 'dry nostrils' in Part 5, Symptoms and Signs, which will also direct you to these other chapters.

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PART 1

Diagnosis by
Observation

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INTRODUCTION

Diagnosis by observation is one of the most important aspects of Chinese diagnosis. In ancient times, it was considered the highest diagnostic art and the mark of a superior doctor who could diagnose simply by looking at a patient, without any need to ask questions or to palpate. Observation of the patient is also the first diagnostic technique used as a patient comes in, and a great deal of information can be obtained simply by observation, such as the patient's constitution, body type, Five-Element type and deviations from it, constitutional state of Yin and Yang, state of the Mind and Spirit, etc.

Diagnosis by observation in Chinese medicine is based on the principle that the internal organs and their

disharmonies manifest themselves externally with what the ancient Chinese called 'images' (*xiang*). In disease, every aspect of the complex of clinical manifestations is an 'image' of an internal disharmony; for example, a pulse image, a complexion image, a pattern image, a tongue image, etc.

Chapter 10 of the 'Simple Questions' discusses the concept of 'images': *'The images of the five Yin organs can be deduced and categorized; the five Yin organs correspond to the five sounds which can be detected; the five colours can be observed. The combination of the pulse [image] with the colours can give us the whole picture.'*¹ The concept of correspondence between the internal organs and their external image manifestations can be found throughout the 'Simple Questions' and the 'Spiritual Axis'. For example, Chapter 37 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'The five colours manifest on the face and through them we can observe the Qi of the five Yin organs.'*² Chapter 71 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'By observing the five colours, we can know the state of the 5 Yin organs; by feeling the pulse and observing the colours, we can diagnose conditions of Heat or Cold and Painful Obstruction Syndrome.'*³



Remember: in observation, avoid the two pitfalls: either missing important details though seeing the picture as a whole, or missing the whole picture while paying excessive attention to details.

When observing a patient, it is important to look at the whole picture, integrating the various aspects of observation, but also to pay attention to details. Therefore, there are two pitfalls we should avoid: either considering the whole picture but missing some important details in it, or paying excessive attention to small details but missing the whole picture.

Before discussing the various aspects of diagnosis by observation, it is useful to review the various correspondences between the internal organs and parts of the body, forming a 'map' of the body. These six relationships are:

- Relationship between the five senses, the nine orifices, and the internal organs
- Relationship between areas of the face and the internal organs
- Relationship between the five tissues and the internal organs
- Relationship between the five sites of Qi transportation and the Yin organs
- Manifestations of the five Yin organs
- The 12 cutaneous regions

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FIVE SENSES, THE NINE ORIFICES, AND THE INTERNAL ORGANS

The nine orifices are the two eyes, the two nostrils, the two ears, the mouth, the urethra, and the anus. The orifices according to [Chapter 37](#) of the 'Classic of Difficulties' are different: *'The Five Yin Organs communicate internally with the seven upper orifices. Lung-Qi communicates with the nose: when the nose is in harmony we can detect smells. Liver-Qi communicates with the eyes: if the eyes are in harmony we can distinguish black from white. Spleen-Qi communicates with the mouth: when the mouth is in harmony we can taste food. Heart-Qi communicates with the tongue: when the tongue is in harmony we can taste the five flavours. Kidney-Qi communicates with the ears: when the ears are in harmony we can hear the five sounds. When the Five Yin Organs are not in harmony the seven orifices are blocked.'*⁴

Thus, the 'Classic of Difficulties' mentions only the seven upper orifices, but these differ from the list given above; they make up seven only if we count the eyes and ears as two but the nose as one. If we do this, the seven orifices are the two eyes, the two ears, the nose, the mouth and the tongue. This is the most common way of counting the upper orifices because it assigns them neatly to the five Yin organs. The two lower orifices, being the urethra and anus, are under the influence of the Kidneys.

Therefore the relationship between the nine orifices, the five senses, and the internal organs is as follows:

Orifice	Sense	Yin organ
Eyes (2)	Sight	Liver
Ears (2)	Hearing	Kidneys
Nose (1)	Smell	Lungs
Mouth (1)	Taste	Spleen
Tongue (1)	Taste	Heart
Urethra (1)		Kidneys
Anus (1)		Kidneys

As can be seen, the sense of touch is not included, and the sense of taste is related both to the Spleen and the Heart. According to the above passage from the

'Classic of Difficulties', the Spleen is responsible for the sense of taste in general, whereas the Heart is responsible for distinguishing the five flavours (sweet, sour, bitter, pungent and salty).

[Chapter 59](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' also describes the five sense organs as places where the energy of the Five Yin organs manifests when there are changes in colour: *'When the area between the eyebrows [top of nose] is thin and moist, the disease is in the skin [i.e. Lungs]; when the lips are greenish, yellow, red, white or black, the disease is in the muscles [i.e. Spleen]; when the Nutritive Qi is moist, the disease is in Blood [i.e. Heart]; when the eyes are greenish, yellow, red, white or black, the disease is in the sinews [i.e. Liver]; when the ear is dry and full of dirt, the disease is in the bones [i.e. Kidneys].'*⁵

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE FACE AND THE INTERNAL ORGANS

Each area of the face reflects the state of an internal organ. The 'Simple Questions' ([Chapter 32](#)) and the 'Spiritual Axis' ([Chapter 49](#)) give two different views of these relationships. [Chapter 32](#) of the 'Simple Questions' mentions the correspondence of areas of the face to the five Yin organs in the context of Heat diseases: *'In Heat disease of the Liver, the left cheek becomes red; in Heat disease of the Heart, the forehead becomes red; in Heat disease of the Spleen, the nose becomes red; in Heat disease of the Lungs, the right cheek becomes red; in Heat disease of the Kidneys, the chin becomes red.'*⁶

[Fig. P1.1](#) shows the correspondence of face areas to internal organs according to the 'Simple Questions' and [Fig. P1.2](#) according to the 'Spiritual Axis'.

The significance of the correspondence between areas of the face and the internal organs in diagnosis will be explored in greater detail later.

Yi Zong Jin Jian – Diagnosis (areas of face and Internal Organs)

'The left cheek corresponds to the Liver, the right cheek to the Lungs, the forehead to the Heart, the chin to the Kidneys, the nose to the Spleen.'

Comments

The assignment of face areas to the five Yin Organs is the same as that from the Su Wen.

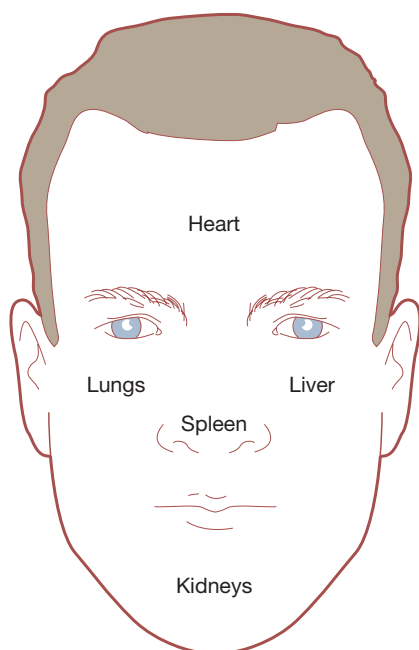


Figure P1.1. Correspondence of facial areas to the internal organs according to the 'Simple Questions'.

Ling Shu, Chapter 49 (face areas and colours)

*'The Ming Tang is the nose bridge; Que is the region between the eyebrows; Ting is the forehead; Fan is the lateral sides of the cheeks; Pie is the tragus. These regions should be regularly shaped and broad so that they can be clearly seen from 10 steps away. People with such features will live to 100.'*⁷ (See Fig. P1.3.)

Ling Shu, Chapter 29

'The Heart is the ruler: its position can be located by the xiphoid process; the Liver is the general and whether it is solid or not can be gauged by the eyes; the Spleen receives the food nutrients and its condition can be gauged by the taste preference; the Kidneys are responsible for hearing and their condition can be gauged by the hearing and the ears.'

*The Stomach is the Sea of Food: a solid face, thick neck and wide chest indicate a good condition of the Stomach. The length of the nose bridge reflects the condition of the Large Intestine. The thickness of the lips and length of the philtrum reflect the condition of the Small Intestine. If the lower eyelids are large it indicates a strong Gall-Bladder. If the nostrils turn up and can be seen from the front, it indicates that the Bladder is leaking. If the nose bridge protrudes it indicates that the Triple Burner is normal. If the upper, middle and lower part of the face are in proportion, it indicates that the functions of the viscera are good.'*⁸ (See Fig. P1.4.)

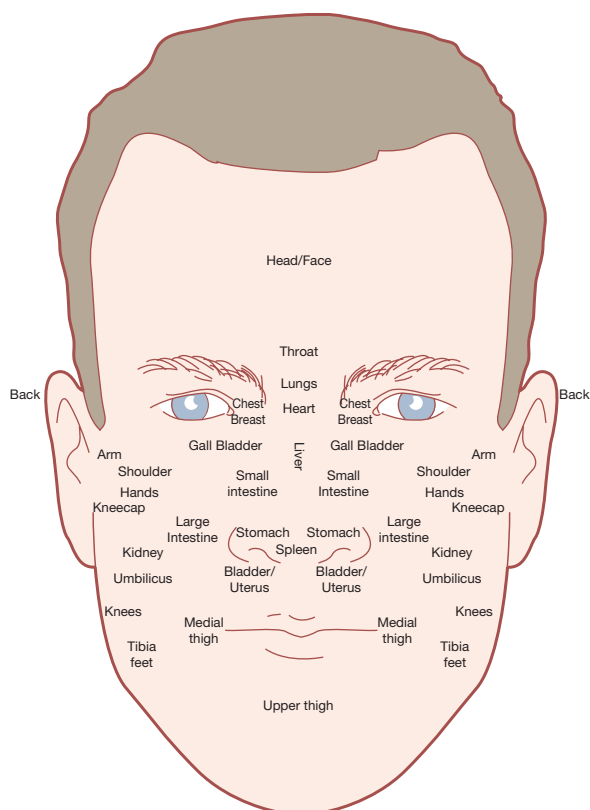


Figure P1.2. Correspondence of facial areas to the internal organs according to the 'Spiritual Axis'.

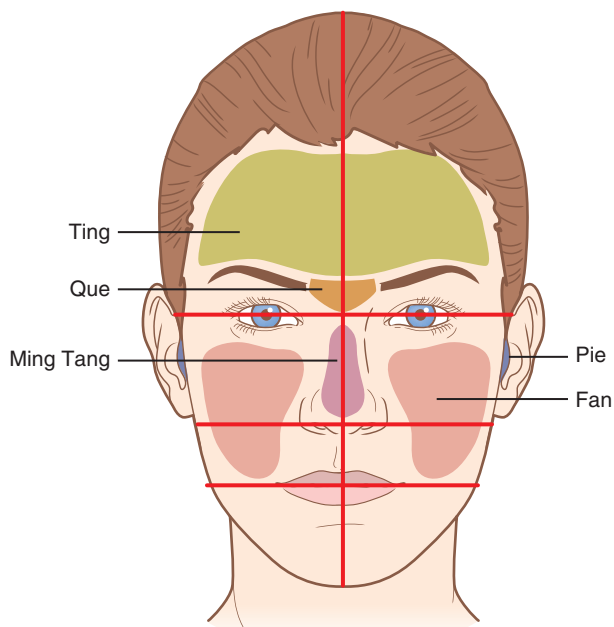


Figure P1.3. Face areas and colours of the Spiritual Axis.

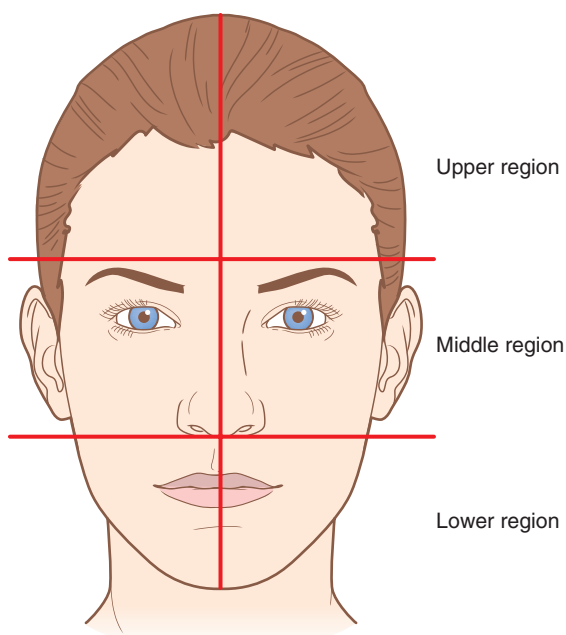


Figure P1.4. The three regions of the face.

Su Wen, Chapter 32 (areas of face involved in febrile disease)

*'In febrile disease of the Liver the left cheek turns red first; in febrile disease of the Heart the forehead turns red first; in febrile disease of the Spleen, the nose turns red first; in febrile disease of the Lungs the right cheek turns red first; in febrile disease of the Kidneys the corner of the mouth turns red first.'*⁹ (See Fig. P1.5.)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FIVE TISSUES AND THE INTERNAL ORGANS

Chapter 4 of the 'Simple Questions' establishes the correspondence between the five tissues and the five Yin organs. This is as follows:

Lungs	skin
Spleen	muscles
Liver	sinews
Heart	blood vessels
Kidneys	bones

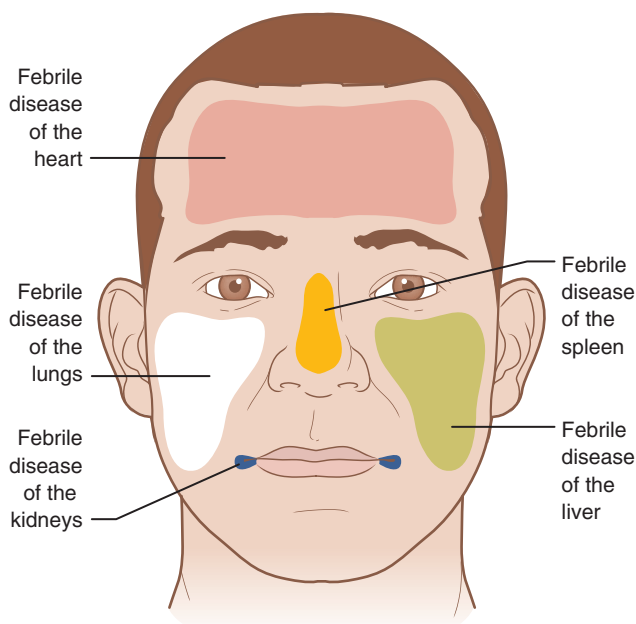


Figure P1.5. Areas of the face involved in febrile diseases.

The Lungs influence the skin insofar as they diffuse the Defensive-Qi in the skin and the space between the skin and muscles (*cou li*); the Lungs also control the opening and closing of the pores and therefore sweating. The relationship between the Lungs and skin is very clear in atopic patients who suffer from both asthma and eczema.

The Spleen influences the muscles causing muscular weakness when it is deficient. The Liver influences the sinews, which include tendons and cartilages – Liver-Blood, in particular, nourishes the sinews in the joints and ensures that they are properly fed and lubricated. The ‘sinews’ and their relationship with the Liver, however, have a broader meaning in Chinese medicine. For example, the nails are considered an extension of the sinews, and tremors or convulsions in a patient suffering from internal Wind are said to be due to ‘shaking of the sinews’.

The Heart governs Blood and influences the state of the blood vessels. The Kidneys influence the bones and bone marrow; in particular, it is the Kidney Essence that nourishes the bones and bone marrow.

The five tissues readily show pathological states of their related organs. When the Lungs are deficient, the space between the skin and muscles is ‘open’, and the person may suffer from spontaneous sweating and will be prone to invasions of external Wind.

When the Spleen is deficient, the person will experience muscular weakness and general tiredness. If the Liver (particularly Liver-Blood) is deficient, the sinews become vulnerable to invasion of Cold, Dampness, or Wind; a deficiency of Liver-Blood may also cause a contraction of the sinews. Liver-Blood stasis or Liver-Qi stagnation may cause a stiffness of the sinews in the joints, whereas Liver-Wind may cause tremors of the sinews.

A deficiency of Heart-Blood may cause a weakness of the blood vessels, whereas Heart-Blood stasis may cause a hardening of the blood vessels. A deficiency of the Kidney Essence may cause brittle bones (osteoporosis).

THE FIVE YIN ORGANS AND THE FIVE TISSUES

- **Lungs:** Skin (pores open)
- **Spleen:** Muscles (weak muscles)
- **Liver:** Sinews (vulnerable to external invasions, stiffness)
- **Heart:** Blood vessels (weakness or hardening)
- **Kidneys:** Bones (brittle bones)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FIVE SITES OF QI TRANSPORTATION AND THE YIN ORGANS

Chapter 4 of the ‘Simple Questions’ says, ‘*The East wind comes in Spring and the Liver is often diseased affecting the neck. The South wind comes in Summer and the Heart is often diseased affecting the chest and hypochondrial region. The West wind comes in Autumn and the Lungs are often diseased affecting the upper back and shoulders. The North wind comes in Winter and the Kidneys are often diseased affecting the thighs and the lower back. The Centre corresponds to Earth and the Spleen is often diseased affecting the spine.*’¹⁰

Thus the ‘Five Sites of Qi Transportation’, where the Qi of the five Yin organs accumulates, are the neck, the chest, the upper back and shoulders, the thighs and lower back, and the spine for the Liver, Heart, Lungs, Kidneys, and Spleen, respectively.

THE FIVE SITES OF QI TRANSPORTATION

- **Neck:** Liver
- **Chest:** Heart
- **Upper back and shoulders:** Lungs
- **Thighs and lower back:** Kidneys
- **Spine:** Spleen

Most of these correspondences are confirmed in practice and have some clinical relevance. For example, the neck is frequently affected by Liver disharmonies, such as Liver-Qi stagnation, or Liver-Yang rising, causing a stiff neck; the relationship between the Heart and the chest is well known; the upper back is frequently affected by Lung disharmonies, such as Lung-Heat, which may cause a pain in this area; the thighs may become weak when the energy of the Kidneys declines; the Spleen has an influence on the spine, and the point SP-3 Taibai may be used to straighten the spine.

MANIFESTATIONS OF THE FIVE YIN ORGANS

Chapter 9 of the ‘Simple Questions’ says: ‘*The Heart... manifests in the face, and nourishes the blood vessels; the Lung...manifests in the body hair and nourishes the skin; the Kidneys...manifest in the hair and nourish the bones; the Liver...manifests in the nails and nourishes the sinews; the flourishing of the Spleen, Stomach, Large Intestine, Small*

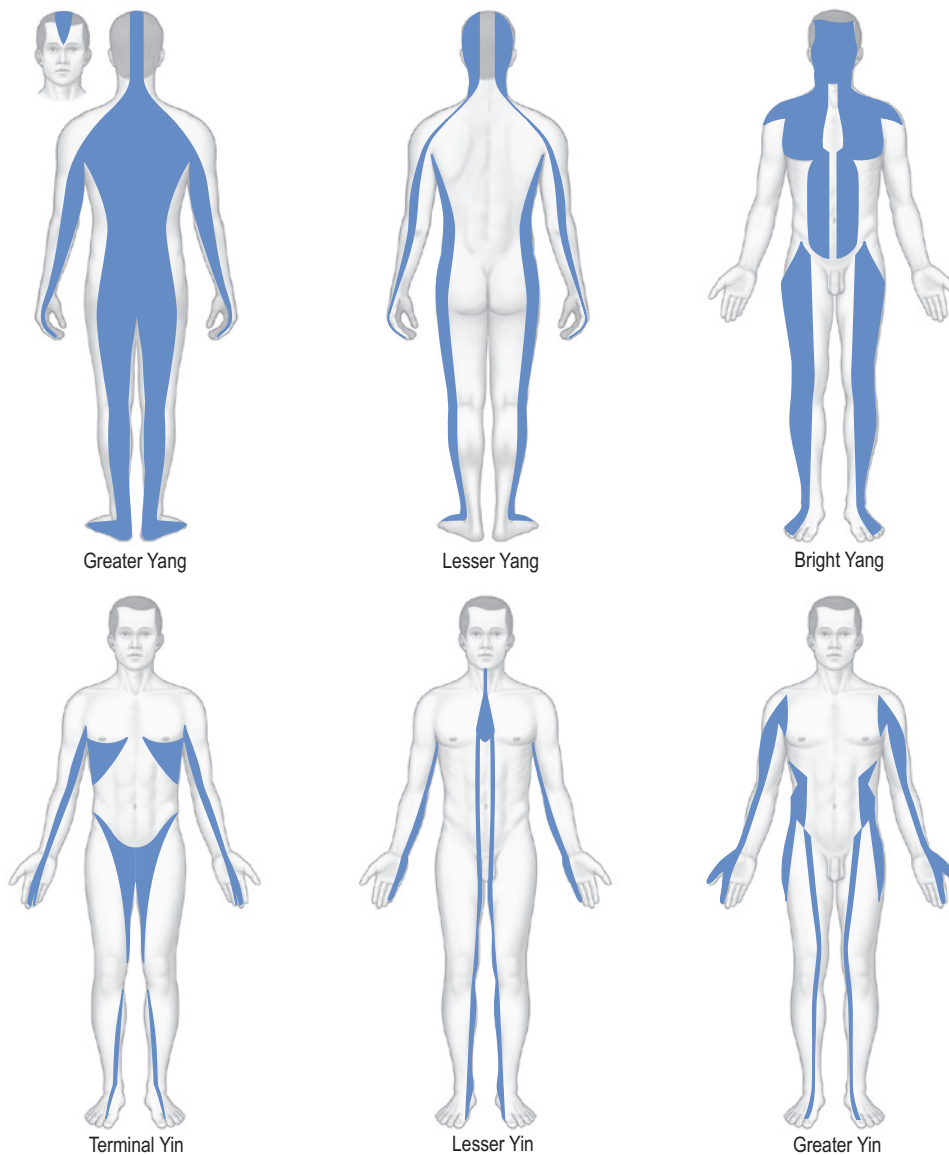


Figure P1.6. The 12 cutaneous regions.

*Intestine, Triple Burner and Bladder...manifests in the white skin around the lips, and nourishes the muscles.'*¹¹

The manifestation sites of the five Yin organs are well known and widely used in practice. For example, the facial complexion as a whole reflects the state of the Heart; the body hair may become withered when the Lungs are weak; the hair becomes dull and brittle when the Kidneys are deficient and grey when the Kidney-Essence declines; the nails become brittle when Liver-Blood is deficient; the lips may become dry

when Spleen-Yin is deficient or red when the Spleen has Heat.

MANIFESTATIONS OF THE FIVE YIN ORGANS

- **Face:** Heart
- **Body hair:** Lungs
- **Head hair:** Kidneys
- **Nails:** Liver
- **Lips:** Spleen

THE TWELVE CUTANEOUS REGIONS

Chapter 56 of the 'Simple Questions' says, '*The twelve cutaneous regions follow the course of the twelve main channels.*'¹² The area on the skin overlying each main channel constitutes its cutaneous region (Fig. P1.6). This correspondence between wide skin sections and the channels and internal organs is, of course, crucial to many aspects of diagnosis by observation. The cutaneous region of a particular channel reflects its pathologies and those of the relevant organ. A pathology of the relevant channel may manifest on the corresponding cutaneous region with pain, discoloration, skin rashes, veins, venules, contraction of muscles, etc. Thus the cutaneous regions are very immediate and important diagnostic signs.

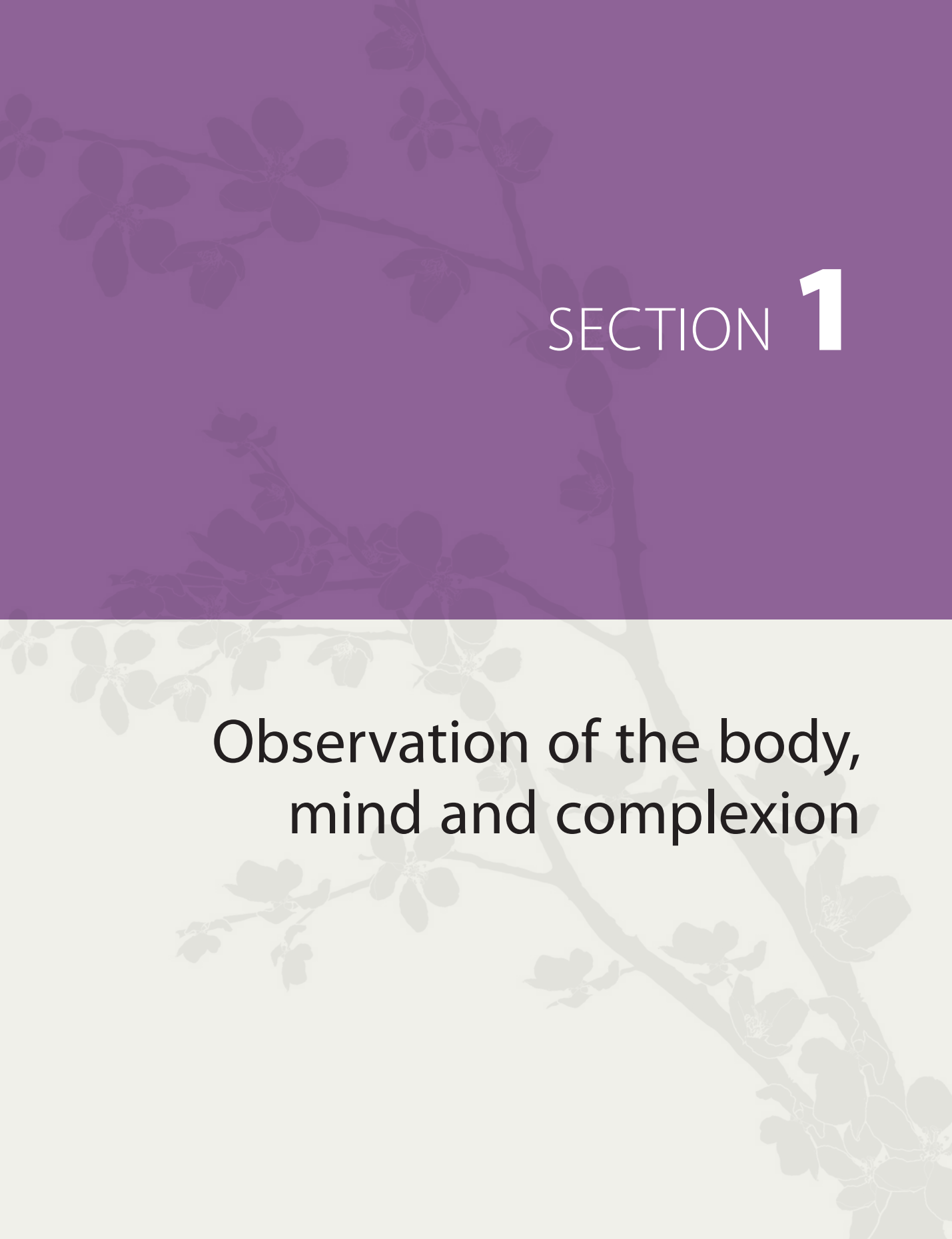
The most important implication of the cutaneous regions is that the influence of each channel is not restricted to its line of trajectory, but rather spreads over a broad area around the channel, so that every part of the body is covered by a given channel.

The above discussion highlighted the various relationships between the Internal Organs and external manifestations; it is these relationships that make diagnosis by observation possible.

The main Chinese source for the discussion of observation in Chinese diagnosis was Zhang Shu Sheng 1995 'Great Treatise of Diagnosis by Observation in Chinese Medicine' (*Zhong Hua Yi Xue Wang Zhen Da Quan*), Shanxi Science Publishing House, Taiyuan.

END NOTES

1. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 75. First published c.100 BC.
2. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 77. First published c.100 BC.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
4. Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine: 1979 A Revised Explanation of the Classic of Difficulties (*Nan Jing Jiao Shi* 难经校释), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 91. First published c.100.
5. Spiritual Axis, p. 108.
6. Simple Questions, p. 189.
7. 1981 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing*), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 96. First published c.100 BC.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
9. Simple Questions, p. 186.
10. Simple Questions, p. 23.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 290.



SECTION 1

Observation of the body,
mind and complexion

INTRODUCTION

Observation of the body includes observation of the body's shape, physique, demeanour, and movements. The first things we observe as a patient comes in are probably the body shape, way of walking, general appearance, demeanour, and personality. One can formulate a very good first impression of the patient's constitutional type in the first few minutes of the consultation simply by observing the above features. There are various ways of classifying body types, and these are listed below, bearing in mind that 'observation of the body' includes observation of the body's shape, physique, demeanour, and personality.

Before describing and discussing the various body shapes and their clinical significance, we should first highlight two important principles of diagnosis by observation: the principle of correspondence between individual parts of the body and the whole, and the importance of observing and assessing constitutional traits. The latter is important because all the various body types reflect not a patient's actual, present disharmonies, but his or her constitutional traits.

This introduction will be discussed under the following headings:

1. Correspondence between an individual part and the whole
2. Observation of constitutional traits

1. CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN AN INDIVIDUAL PART AND THE WHOLE

One of the principles on which diagnosis by observation in Chinese medicine is based is that each single, small part of the body reflects the whole.

The face as a microsystem

The face is a very important example of this principle, as it is a reflection both of the internal organs and of various parts of the body. [Chapter 32](#) of the Simple Questions lists the correspondence of various parts of the face with internal organs, as follows: *'In Heat disease of the Liver, the left cheek becomes red; in Heat disease of the Heart, the forehead becomes red; in Heat disease of the Spleen, the nose becomes red; in Heat disease of the Lungs, the right cheek becomes red; in Heat disease of the Kidneys, the chin becomes red.'*¹ (See [Fig. P1.1](#).)

[Chapter 49](#) of the Spiritual Axis gives a more detailed map of the correspondence between internal organs and parts of the body and various areas of the face.² (See [Fig. P1.2](#).)

A careful observation of these face areas and their colours is an extremely important part of diagnosis by observation, which should be always carried out. The correspondence between face areas and internal organs reveals three possible conditions:

- an actual disharmony (e.g. red cheeks may indicate Heat in the Lungs)
- a constitutional trait (e.g. short earlobes may indicate weak Kidneys and a short life)
- an aetiological factor (e.g. a bluish colour on the forehead [related to the Heart, according to the 'Simple Questions' correspondences] in a child may indicate pre-natal shock)

The correspondence between face areas and internal organs should be integrated with the colour of the complexion in those areas and interpreted in the light of the Five Elements. For example, a greenish colour in the face area corresponding to the Spleen (i.e. the tip of the nose) indicates that the Liver is invading the Spleen and that that particular Spleen disharmony is secondary to a Liver disharmony.

The ear as a microsystem

Ear acupuncture is a well-known application of the principle that a single, small part of the body reflects the whole. According to this theory, the ear resembles an upside-down foetus, and there is a point in the ear pavilion that reflects a part or an organ of the body.

Microsystems over the whole body

According to recent theories in China, each part of the body is a miniature replica of the whole and can therefore reflect pathological changes of the whole body.

The following microsystems reflect this general hypothesis: ear acupuncture, facial colour diagnosis, iris diagnosis, tongue diagnosis, nose acupuncture, face acupuncture, foot acupuncture, etc. According to modern Chinese research, a certain part of the body can reflect the whole body; this principle can be used both in diagnosis and in treatment. Diseases of different parts of the body can be treated using points on a specific area of the body, such as the ear, hand, or nose. Chinese

researchers have identified 102 microsystems in the body as follows:

- Metacarpal bone system: 5 on each side, 10 in total
- Hand phalangeal bone system: 14 on each side, 28 in total
- Radius system: 1 on each side, 2 in total
- Ulna system: 1 on each side, 2 in total
- Humerus system: 1 on each side, 2 in total
- Femur system: 1 on each side, 2 in total
- Tibia system: 1 on each side, 2 in total
- Fibula system: 1 on each side, 2 in total
- Metatarsal bone system: 5 on each side, 10 in total
- Foot phalangeal bone system: 14 on each side, 28 in total
- Ear system: 1 on each side, 2 in total
- Face system: 1
- Nose system: 1
- Tongue system: 1
- Body trunk system: 1
- Neck system: 1
- Scalp system: 1 in the middle, 1 on each side, 3 in total
- Eye system: 1 on each eye, 2 in total
- Foot system: 1 on each foot, 2 in total.³

This theory was first proposed by Zhang Ying Qing in 1973. In diagnosing and needling the side of the second metacarpal bone, he discovered that the points on this bone formed a pattern and constituted a miniature of the whole body (Fig. P1S1.1).

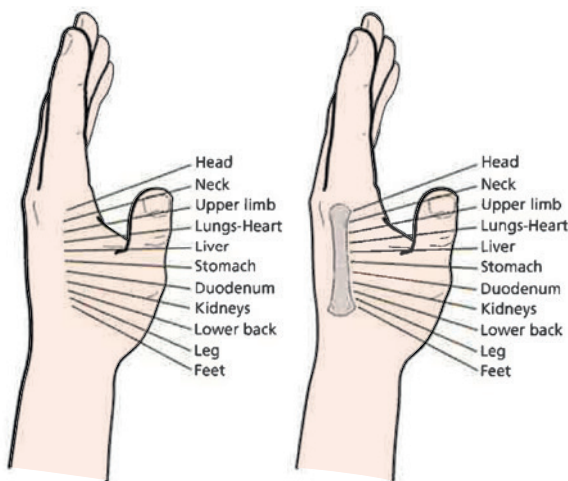


Figure P1S1.1. Microsystems of diagnosis.

After repeated research, he discovered other microsystems all over the body (Fig. P1S1.2).

2. OBSERVATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL TRAITS

The art of observation in Chinese medicine is based on two broad areas: observation of constitutional traits and observation of actual disharmony signs. For example, a tall, thin, sinewy body indicates a constitutional Wood type, but it does not necessarily indicate any actual disharmony in the Liver or Gall-Bladder. Conversely, a person may belong constitutionally to a Fire type but have a pale-greenish complexion, brittle nails, and dry hair, indicating an actual Wood disharmony (in this example, Liver-Blood deficiency).

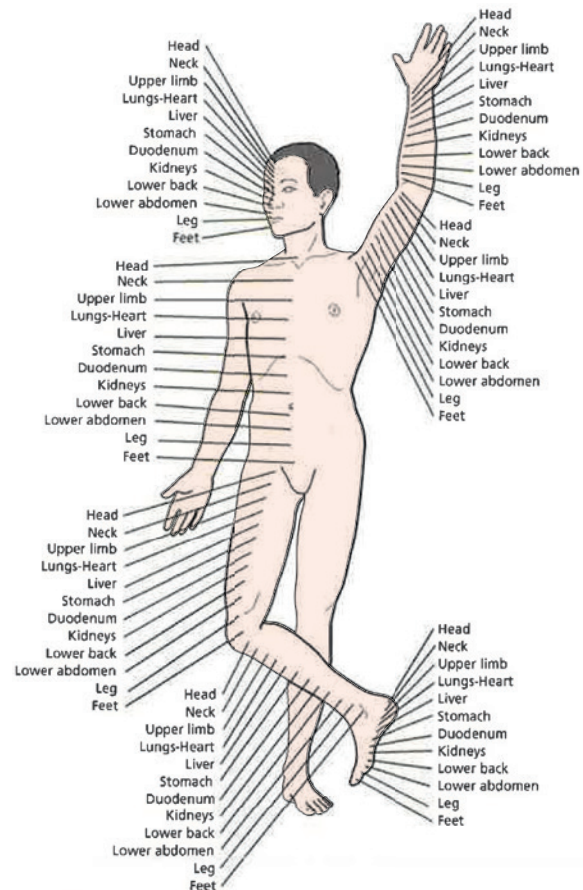


Figure P1S1.2. Microsystems of the body according to Dr. Zhang Ying Qing.

Why is it necessary to observe constitutional traits, given that we need to treat the presenting disharmony? In the above example of a patient with a pale-greenish complexion, brittle nails, and dry hair, we obviously need to nourish Liver-Blood, whatever the observation of constitutional characteristics might indicate.

However, observation of constitutional traits is important for various reasons, described below.

- a) A constitutional type indicates the *tendency* to certain disharmonies, and it therefore allows us to forecast, and accordingly to prevent, a possible pathological development. For example, if a person with constitutional Yang Excess suffers an invasion of Wind-Heat and a febrile illness, we can expect that person to have a strong tendency to develop an intense Heat pattern. In terms of the Four Levels, we can foretell that that person might enter the Qi level more quickly and with more Heat than another person; this means that we should be prepared for this and administer strong cooling herbs.
- b) Observation of a constitutional type and tendency allows us to put the presenting disharmony into perspective, helping us to gauge its severity. For example, if a person with constitutional Yang Excess develops a Heat pattern, that is a less severe situation than a Heat pattern in a person with constitutional Yin Excess or constitutional Yang Deficiency.
- c) Observation of constitutional traits and the deviation or conformity of a person to his or her constitutional type gives us an idea of the severity of a problem and therefore the prognosis. For example, it is better for a Wood type to have a Wood rather than a Fire disharmony. So, if a Wood type suffers from a Fire disharmony, this indicates a worse prognosis than that of a Fire type suffering from a Fire disharmony or a Wood type suffering from a Wood disharmony.
- d) Observation of constitutional types is important to give patients an underlying treatment, irrespective of the presenting disharmony. It is always important to bear in mind the constitutional type and treat it accordingly. In the above example, if a person of a Wood type suffers from a Fire disharmony, it is obviously necessary to treat the presenting disharmony but, perhaps afterwards, it would be good to treat also the Element type (i.e. Wood). The treatment of the underlying Element

type is an important aspect of the preventive potential of Chinese medicine, and it should always be applied.

- e) Treatment of the constitutional Element type is particularly useful in the case of mental-emotional problems. For example, a Wood type might display some typical emotional traits, such as indecision and inability to plan one's life; treatment of the Wood Element would help the person on a mental-emotional level, whatever other disharmony that person might suffer from.
- f) Observation of the constitutional type and tendency of a patient allows us to forecast the type of disharmony that such a patient might be subject to in the future; this means that the preventive potential of Chinese medicine can be exploited to the full. For example, if a person in his or her 40s displays signs of constitutional Yang Excess and also pertains to the Wood type, we know that that person may have a strong tendency to develop Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire, with signs such as hypertension. This allows us to actively subdue Yang and pacify Wood even in the absence of any clinical manifestations.
- g) Observation of the Element type is useful when a person displays all the traits of a certain Element type except for one detail; that is a bad sign even if that person may not suffer any disharmony yet. For

THE IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVING CONSTITUTIONAL TRAITS

- A constitutional type indicates a tendency to certain disharmonies and therefore allows us to forecast and prevent a possible pathological development during the course of an illness.
- It allows us to put the presenting disharmony into perspective and helps us to gauge its severity.
- Deviation or conformity of a person to his or her constitutional type is a good measure of prognosis.
- It helps us to give patients a treatment appropriate to the underlying constitution, irrespective of the presenting disharmony.
- It is particularly useful in the treatment of mental-emotional problems.
- It allows us to forecast the type of disharmony that a patient might be subject to in the future and therefore to treat the patient preventively.
- Deviation from an Element type in one detail may be a warning sign.

example, if a person displays all the characteristics of the Fire type but he or she walks slowly, this small detail tells us that something is amiss and that that person may develop a serious disharmony. This discrepancy might be particularly relevant in the case of the Fire type, as we know that a Fire type may have a tendency to develop a serious pathology very suddenly.

END NOTES

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1

Observation of the Body Shape, Physique and Demeanour

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Classification of body shape according to Yin and Yang

Body shape abundant in Yang

Body shape abundant in Yin

Body shape deficient in Yang

Body shape deficient in Yin

Body shape with Yin and Yang in balance

Classification of body shape according to the Five Elements

Wood type

Fire type

Earth type

Metal type

Water type

Clinical application of the Five Element types

Classification of body shape according to pre-natal and post-natal influences

Body shape with strong pre-natal constitution

Body shape with weak pre-natal constitution

Body shape with strong post-natal Qi

Body shape with weak post-natal Qi

Classification according to type of body build

Robust type

Compact type

Muscular type

Thin type

Overweight type

Classification of body shape according to pain and drug tolerance

Body shape indicating high pain and drug tolerance

Body shape indicating low pain and drug tolerance

The body shape of a person is determined by the pre-natal constitution and subsequent post-natal nourishment: for this reason, the body shape of a person can give us an indication both of the constitutional tendency to a certain pathology and of an actual pathology resulting from post-natal influences.

For example, a thin body indicates a Yin-deficiency pre-natal constitution but if that person has developed

excess fat around the waist, then we can gauge a pathology deriving from post-natal influences ([Fig. 1.1](#)).

Observation of the body (including size, height, tone of skin and muscles, length of bones, etc.), as well as of demeanour and personality, is important to assess the constitution of a patient. [Chapter 21](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says, '*In diagnosing diseases one should observe whether the patient is extrovert or timid and observe the state of the bones, muscles and skin in order to understand the condition so that we can diagnose and treat*'.¹

There are five different ways of classifying the body shape in Chinese medicine, and these are described in the following sections:

1. Classification of Body Shape According to Yin and Yang
 - a) Body Shape Abundant in Yang
 - b) Body Shape Abundant in Yin
 - c) Body Shape Deficient in Yang
 - d) Body Shape Deficient in Yin
 - e) Body Shape with Yin and Yang in Balance
2. Classification of Body Shape According to the Five Elements
 - a) Wood Type
 - b) Fire Type
 - c) Earth Type
 - d) Metal Type
 - e) Water Type
 - f) Clinical Application of the Five Element Types
3. Classification of Body Shape According to Pre-natal and Post-natal Influences
 - a) Body Shape with Strong Pre-natal Constitution
 - b) Body Shape with Weak Pre-natal Constitution
 - c) Body Shape with Strong Post-natal Qi
 - d) Body Shape with Weak Post-natal Qi
4. Classification According to Type of Body Build
 - a) Robust Type
 - b) Compact Type
 - c) Muscular Type
 - d) Thin Type
 - e) Overweight Type

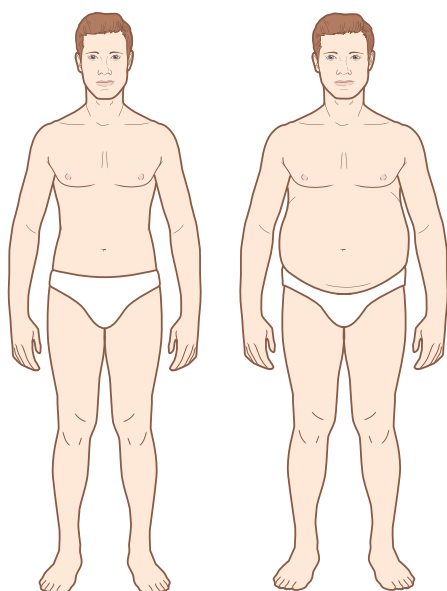


Figure 1.1. Pre-natal and post-natal influences.

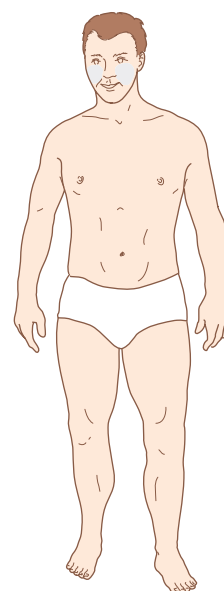


Figure 1.2. Body shape abundant in Yang.

5. Classification of Body Shape According to Drug and Pain Tolerance

- Body Shape Indicating High Drug and Pain Tolerance
- Body Shape Indicating Low Drug and Pain Tolerance

1. CLASSIFICATION OF BODY SHAPE ACCORDING TO YIN AND YANG

The possible body shapes according to Yin and Yang are:

- Body shape abundant in Yang
- Body shape abundant in Yin
- Body shape deficient in Yang
- Body shape deficient in Yin
- Body shape with Yin and Yang in balance

Chapter 31 of Volume 4 of the 'Classic of Categories' (Lei Jing, 1624) summarizes the characteristics of people with a constitutional excess of Yin, people with a constitutional excess of Yang and people with a balance of Yin and Yang:

People gifted with pure Yin are known as the Greater-Yin type; those with a mixture of Yin and Yang but more Yin than Yang are known as the Lesser-Yin type; those with pure Yang are known as the Greater-Yang type; those with a mixture of Yin and Yang but more Yang than Yin are known as the Lesser-Yang type. Together with the type of people with equal Yang and Yin, these constitute the five different types

*of people. Therefore, for people with abundant-Yang constitution, it is advisable to use cooling methods of treatment. For people with abundant-Yin constitution, it is advisable to use warming methods of treatment.*²

a) Body shape abundant in Yang

Observation

The body shape, demeanour and personality of a person with abundant Yang are as follows: strong body build, tendency to a red face, preference for cold, intolerance of heat, preference for light clothes, lively character, active and talkative nature, loud voice, tendency to laugh, tendency to being a high achiever, decisiveness, assertiveness, walking with the chest and stomach projecting forward (Fig. 1.2).

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned features indicate abundant Yang (which could be of the Greater-Yang or Lesser-Yang type, as described in the quotations below). It is important to stress that such a body shape indicates only a constitutional tendency to excess of Yang and not necessarily an actual pattern of Yang Excess. In pathological conditions, a person with an abundant-Yang constitution will have a tendency to excess of Yang (i.e. Heat or Fire). In treatment, emphasis should be put on reducing Yang and nourishing Yin.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 72 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

*A Greater-Yang type of person looks arrogant with the chest and stomach projected forward as if the body was bending backwards. This is the picture of a Greater-Yang type of person. A Lesser-Yang type of person holds the head high while standing, and shakes the body while walking. The two hands are often held behind the body with the arms and elbows exposed on the side of the body. This is the picture of a Lesser-Yang type of person.*³

Chapter 72 of the 'Spiritual Axis' also says: 'A Greater-Yang type of person has excess of Yang and deficiency of Yin and it is necessary to examine them with great care and treat them so that the Yin is not reduced to the point of collapse. The Yang must be reduced but not excessively to the point of collapse, lest the patient develops madness'.⁴

Chapter 67 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'A person with abundant Yang is emotional and as warm as fire; he talks fast and is swollen with arrogance. It is because the Heart- and Lung-Qi of such a person are abundant; Yang-Qi is therefore plentiful and flows freely and vigorously. For this reason, it is easy to stimulate his spirit, and the Qi arrives quickly when acupuncture is given'.⁵

The 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (Yi Zong Jin Jian, 1742) points out in the chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods':

*People with abundant Yang hold their head high while standing because it is in the nature of Yang to rise. They shake their body while walking because it is in the nature of Yang to move. They often hold their hands behind the body with the arms and elbows by the sides of the body as it is in the nature of Yang to be exposed. This is the picture of the personality of the Lesser-Yang type of people.*⁶

The 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (Yi Zong Jin Jian, 1742) says:

*The six external pathogenic factors attack people in the same way but diseases caused by them will have different manifestations in different people. Why? The reason is that a person's body can be either strong or weak, Qi can be full or deficient, and the internal organs can be of cold or hot. After the external pathogenic factors invade the body, they will transform according to the condition of the internal organs. Therefore, the syndromes vary. They can transform into deficient or excessive conditions, and into cold or hot conditions.*⁷

This last quotation highlights an important principle of Chinese medicine: pathogenic factors tend to develop in their pathology according to the pre-existing

constitution of the person. For example, if a person who is constitutionally abundant in Yang suffers an invasion of external Wind, this will develop into Wind-Heat, while if a person who is constitutionally abundant in Yin suffers the same invasion, the external Wind will manifest as Wind-Cold.

b) Body shape abundant in Yin

Observation

The typical characteristics of a person of the abundant-Yin type: tendency to obesity, relatively dark complexion, loose muscles with thick skin, quiet, reticent and introverted nature, soft voice, preference for heat and a desire to wrap up warm (Fig. 1.3).

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned features indicate an abundant-Yin constitution. It is important to stress that such a body shape indicates only a constitutional *tendency* to excess of Yin and not necessarily an actual pattern of Yin Excess. In pathological conditions, a person with an abundant-Yin constitution will have a tendency to excess of Yin (i.e. Cold, Dampness or Phlegm). Common patterns appearing in people with an abundant-Yin constitution include Cold, Dampness, Damp-Phlegm, Cold-Phlegm,

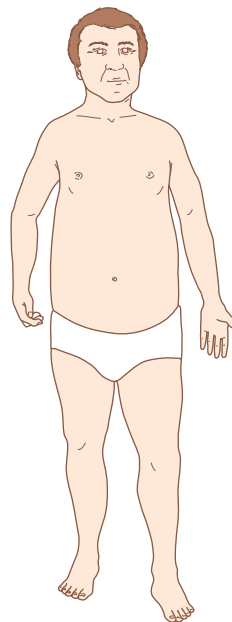


Figure 1.3. Body shape abundant in Yin.

Phlegm-Fluids, Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, etc. In treatment, emphasis should be put on reducing Yin, expelling Cold, resolving Dampness and Phlegm and tonifying Yang. At the same time, attention should be paid to regulating Qi and invigorating Blood.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 72 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'Persons of the Greater-Yin type have a sombre countenance and pretend to be humble. They have the body build of a grown-up, but make themselves smaller by bending their back and knees slightly. This is the picture of a Greater-Yin type of person... They are restless while standing, and walk as if to hide themselves. This is the picture of a Lesser-Yin type of person'.⁸

Chapter 72 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'Persons of the Greater-Yin type are constitutionally excessive in Yin and deficient in Yang. Their Yin and Blood are thick and turbid. Their Defensive Qi does not flow freely. Yin and Yang are not in a harmonious state, which leads to loose sinews and thick skin. When needling patients with an abundant-Yin constitution, only through reducing the Yin quickly and immediately can an improvement be expected'.⁹

The same chapter of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Yellow Emperor asks: "How is it that sometimes the body will react only after several acupuncture treatments?" Qi Bo answers, "Such a person is excessive in Yin and deficient in Yang. The movement of Qi is restrained and therefore it is difficult for Qi to arrive when the patient is needed. This is the reason why the body will react to the acupuncture only after several treatments"'.¹⁰ This passage clearly relates the ease or difficulty with which a patient reacts to acupuncture to the relative balance of Yin and Yang: patients with a constitutional abundance of Yin will react to acupuncture more slowly.

c) Body shape deficient in Yang

Observation

The typical characteristics of a person with the deficient-Yang type of body shape are as follows: overweight/swollen body, pale or pale-bluish complexion, listlessness, low spirits, slow movement, weak, loose muscles, preference for warmth, aversion to cold, cold limbs, desire to wrap up (Fig. 1.4).

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned body appearance indicates that the patient is constitutionally deficient in Yang. It is important to stress that such a body shape indicates

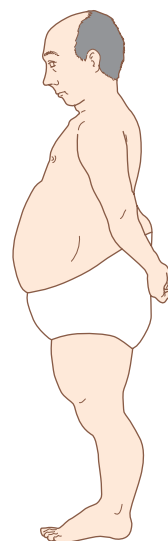


Figure 1.4. Body shape deficient in Yang.

only a constitutional *tendency* to Yang deficiency: it does not necessarily follow that every person with such a body shape actually suffers from Yang deficiency.

When such a constitutional tendency does manifest with an actual Yang deficiency, these people will suffer symptoms of Cold, Cold-Dampness, Cold-Phlegm, Damp-Phlegm and Phlegm-Fluids.

d) Body shape deficient in Yin

Observation

The typical characteristics of a person with a deficient-Yin type of body shape are as follows: thin body build, sometimes red cheeks and lips, excited look, restless expression in eyes, propensity to be excited, feeling of heat and quick movements. People of Yin-deficient body shape are often deficient in Yin and excessive in Yang. The body is thin and tall with a long-shaped head, thin long neck, narrow shoulders and a narrow, long, flat chest. These people often bend forward when they walk or stand (Fig. 1.5).

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned features indicate a deficient-Yin constitution. It is important to stress that such a body shape indicates only a constitutional *tendency* to deficiency of Yin and not necessarily an actual pattern of Yin deficiency. In pathology, these patients will tend to

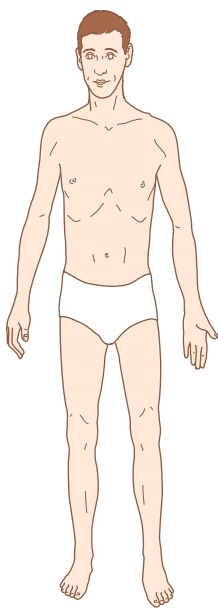


Figure 1.5. Body shape deficient in Yin.

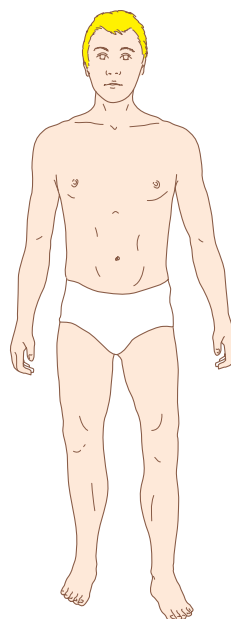


Figure 1.6. Body shape with harmony of Yin and Yang.

Yin or Essence deficiency and hyperactivity of Yang. When they fall ill, they will easily develop Empty Heat or Dryness.

e) Body shape with Yin and Yang in balance

Observation

The body shape with harmony of Yin and Yang is of medium build, not too tall or short, neither too stout nor thin. The movements are balanced and the personality is stable. People with such a constitution are better able to adapt themselves to changes caused by the stresses of life (Fig. 1.6).

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned features indicate a harmony of Yin and Yang. These people are less easily attacked by external pathogenic factors. When they do fall ill, the pathogenic factors are often not strong, the location of the disease is superficial, and the disease itself is mild.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 72 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'People with the body shape with harmony of Yin and Yang look elegant and graceful'.¹¹

2. CLASSIFICATION OF BODY SHAPE ACCORDING TO THE FIVE ELEMENTS

The body shapes according to the Five Elements are:

- Wood type
- Fire type
- Earth type
- Metal type
- Water type
- Clinical application of the five element types

a) Wood type

Observation

People of the Wood type have a subtle shade of green in their complexion, a relatively small head and long-shaped face, broad shoulders, straight back, tall, sinewy body and elegant hands and feet. In terms of personality, they have developed intelligence but their physical strength is poor. Hard workers, they think things over and tend to worry (Figs 1.7–1.9).

Clinical significance

People of the Wood type often suffer from diseases caused by pathogenic factors in autumn and winter. They are in relatively good health in spring and summer.

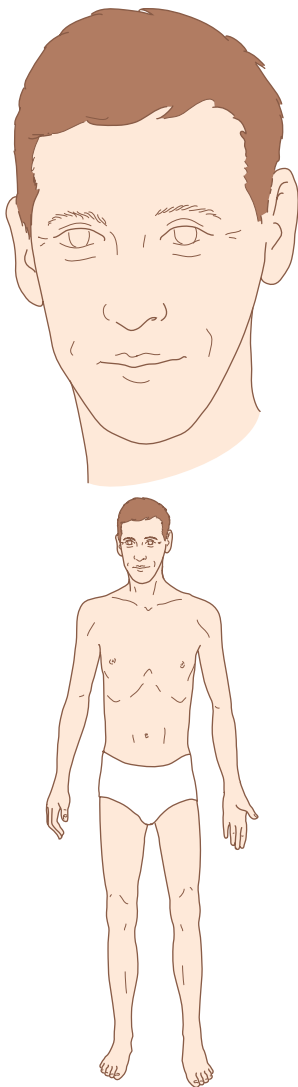


Figure 1.7. Wood type.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 64 of 'Spiritual Axis' says:

The Wood type of people correspond to Shang Jiao of the note Jiao, which is one of the five notes and is related to the element of Wood. Their complexion colour is similar to that of the Green Emperor, who is one of the five heavenly emperors, and represents the East. Their complexion has a subtle green colour, they have a small head, long-shaped face, broad back and shoulders, straight body trunk and small hands and feet. They are intelligent, and keep their mind



Figure 1.8. Wood-type face ©Roger Ressmeyer/CORBIS.



Figure 1.9. Wood-type body.

working hard. They are not strong physically. They are often worried. They like Spring and Summer and dislike Autumn and Winter.¹²

In addition **Chapter 64** of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'People of the Wood type can tolerate Spring and Summer

but not Autumn or Winter. In Autumn or Winter, they suffer from diseases caused by invasion of pathogenic factors'.¹³

The chapter 'Key to the Four Diagnostic Methods' in the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (Yi Zong Jin Jian, 1742) says:

*People of the Wood type respond to the colour green, which is at its best when, like green wood, there is moisture in it. People of the Wood type have a straight body just like the trunk of a tree. They have the so-called five kinds of Smallness, i.e. a small head, small hands and small feet, just like the twigs of a tree. They have the so-called five kinds of Thinness and Length, implying a long, thin body trunk and limbs, like the branches of a tree. Just as wood has various uses and can be cut in different ways as wanted, people of the Wood type are versatile, and are apt to intellectual work. Just as wood is seldom quiet [i.e. always swaying in wind and breeze], people of the Wood type tend to worry, and are often exhausted by what they do. If wood is not straight but is short and soft, it is not good timber for use.*¹⁴

WOOD TYPE

- Greenish complexion
- Small head
- Long face
- Broad shoulders
- Straight back
- Sinewy body
- Tall
- Small hands and feet

b) Fire type

Observation

People of the Fire type have a red, florid complexion, wide teeth, a pointed, small head, possibly with a pointed chin, hair that is either curly or scanty, well-developed muscles of the shoulders, back, hips and head and relatively small hands and feet. In terms of personality, they are keen thinkers. The Fire type is quick, energetic and active. They are short-tempered. They walk firmly and shake their body while walking. They tend to think too much and often worry. They have a good spirit of observation and they analyse things deeply (Figs 1.10 and 1.11).

Clinical significance

People of the Fire type are healthy in spring and summer but sick in autumn and winter from invasion of pathogenic factors. When compared with other Element types, people of the Fire type may tend to suffer a sudden death.

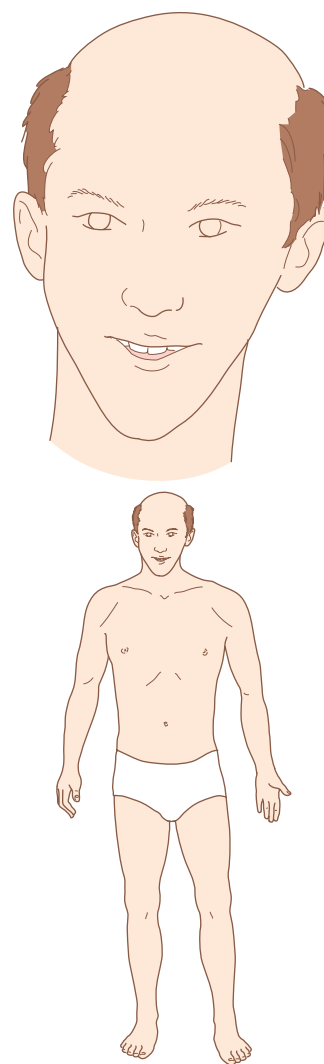


Figure 1.10. Fire type.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 64 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

People of the Fire type correspond to Shang Zhi of the note Zhi, which is one of the five notes, and is related to the element of Fire. The colour of their complexion is similar to that of the Red Emperor, who was one of the five heavenly emperors, and represents the South. They have a red complexion, wide teeth, a thin small face, small head, well-developed and nice-looking shoulders, back, thighs and abdomen. They have small hands and feet. They walk with



Figure 1.11. Fire-type face ©Dave Bartruff/CORBIS.

*quick steps but tread the ground softly and soundlessly, and their body shakes as they walk. They are short-tempered. They act boldly and make light of money, but they are not trustworthy. They worry too much. They have a good sense of judgment. The colour of their complexion is attractive, but they are short-tempered. They like Spring and Summer and dislike Autumn and Winter.*¹⁵

Chapter 64 of the 'Spiritual Axis' also says: 'People of the Fire type have a short life often ending with a sudden death. They can tolerate Spring and Summer but not Autumn or Winter. In Autumn or Winter they will suffer from diseases caused by invasion of pathogenic factors.'

The chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods' of the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' says:

People of the Fire type have a red complexion which is best when it is also bright [i.e. with shen]. They have the so-called Five Pointed Structures, i.e. a pointed head, forehead, nose, face and mouth: they are similar to the pointed shape of a flame when it flares up...People of the Fire type are bold and daring because Fire is Yang in nature and rich in Qi. They make light of money, which is similar to the scattering nature of Fire. They are not trustworthy for just like a fire they are constantly changing. They tend to worry, mirroring the flickering of a flame. They move constantly just like a fire which is always moving. They are short-tempered,

*sharing fire's quickness and suddenness. If these people have symptoms of mental confusion and abnormality of Qi and colour, it means that their body is in disharmony.*¹⁶

FIRE TYPE

- Red complexion
- Wide teeth
- Pointed, small head
- Well-developed shoulder muscles
- Curly hair or not much hair
- Small hands and feet
- Walking briskly

c) Earth type

Observation

People of the Earth type have a yellowish complexion, round-shaped face, relatively big head, wide jaws, well-developed and nice-looking shoulders and back, large abdomen, strong thigh and calf muscles, relatively small hands and feet, and well-built muscles of the whole body. They walk with firm steps without lifting their feet very high. The Earth type is calm and generous, has a steady character, likes to help people and is not overly ambitious. They are easy to get on with (Figs 1.12 and 1.13).

Clinical significance

People of the Earth type are in relatively good health in autumn and winter. They fall prey easily to invasions of pathogenic factors in spring and summer.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 64 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

The Earth type of people correspond to Shang Gong of the note Gong which is one of the five notes, and is related to the element of Earth. Their complexion is similar in colour to that of the Yellow Emperor, who is one of the five heavenly emperors and represents the Centre. They have a yellow complexion, round-shaped face, large head and well-developed and nice-looking shoulders and back. The abdomen is large and their thighs and legs strong and well-built. They have small hands and feet, but well-developed muscles. Every part of their body, from the upper to the lower, is well proportioned. They walk steadily, and are trustworthy. They are calm and like to help people. They are not interested in pursuing power or position. They like to establish good relations with other people. They like Autumn and Winter and dislike Spring and Summer.¹⁷

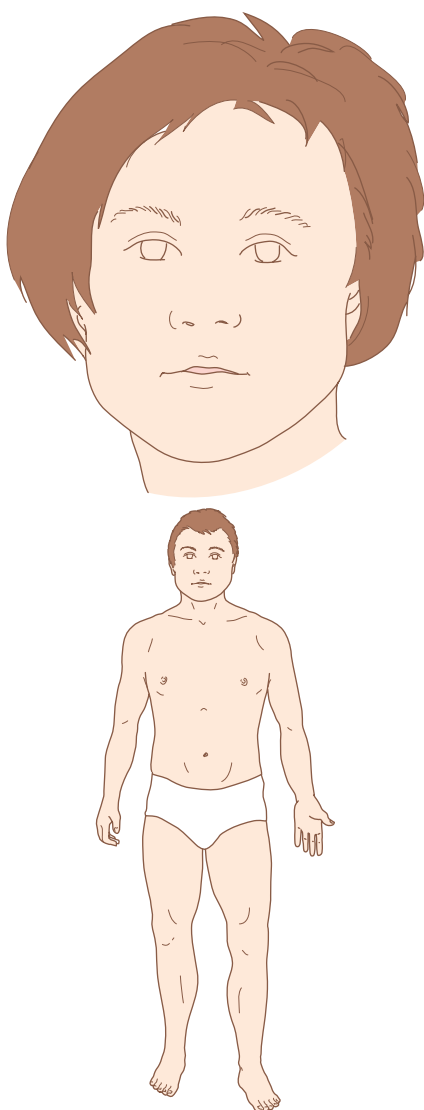


Figure 1.12. Earth type.

The chapter 'Key to the Four Diagnostic Methods' of the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' says:

People of the Earth type respond to the yellow colour, which is best when it is also shiny. They have the so-called Five Kinds of Roundness similar to the round shape of the Earth. They have the so-called Five Kinds of Solidity and Thickness which in nature resemble the solid Earth. They have the so-called Five Kinds of Shortness which is similar to the appearance of the earth being solid and short. Although people with the Earth type of body have the characteristics of roundness, solidity, thickness and shortness, each person



Figure 1.13. Earth-type face ©Arne Hodalic/CORBIS.

*will have a particular, individual shape. The round face, the big head, the large abdomen and the well-built shoulders and legs all resemble the dense and solid appearance of the Earth. People of the Earth type are sincere and trustworthy. They take their time in doing things. They are calm at heart. All these characteristics mirror the nature of Earth in being honest and reliable.*¹⁸

EARTH TYPE

- Yellowish complexion
- Round face
- Wide jaws
- Large head
- Well-developed shoulders and back
- Large abdomen
- Large thighs and calf muscles
- Well-built muscles

d) Metal type

Observation

People of the Metal type have a relatively pale complexion, a square-shaped face, a relatively small head, small shoulders and upper back, a relatively flat abdomen, and small hands and feet. They have a strong voice, move swiftly and have keen powers of thought. They are honest and upright. They are generally quiet and calm in a solid way, but also capable of decisive action

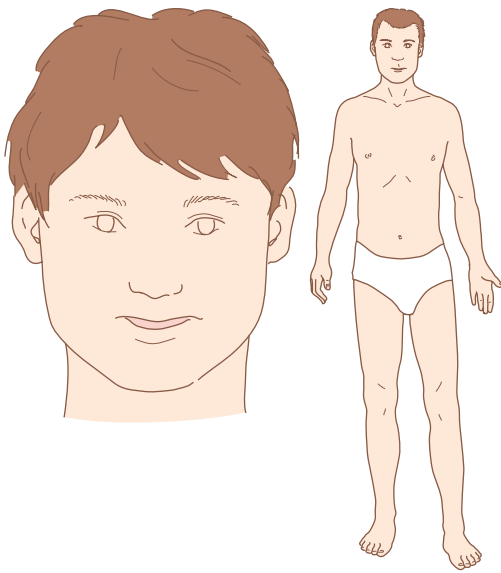


Figure 1.14. Metal type.

when necessary. They have a natural aptitude for leadership and management (Figs 1.14 and 1.15).

Clinical significance

People of the Metal type are in relatively good health in autumn and winter, but may suffer ill health in spring and summer.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 64 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

People of the Metal type correspond to Shang [a musical note] while keeping still, but are intrepid and fierce when active. They have a natural aptitude for leadership and management...People of the Metal type correspond to Shang, which is one of the five notes and is related to the element of Metal. Their complexion is similar to that of the White Emperor, who is one of the five heavenly emperors and represents the West. They have a relatively pale complexion, a small head, small shoulders and upper back, a flat abdomen, and small hands and feet. They have strong heels as if the bones grew outside rather than in. They are quick and swift in movement, and are honest and upright in personality. They are short-tempered. They appear quiet and calm when keeping still, but fierce and bold once they make a move. They have the talent to be officials. They like Autumn and Winter and dislike Spring and Summer.¹⁹

Chapter 64 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'People of the Metal type can tolerate Autumn and Winter but not Spring

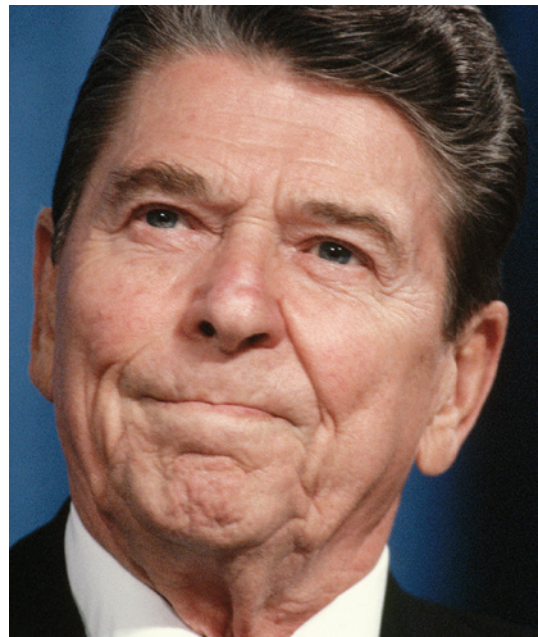


Figure 1.15. Metal-type face ©Wally McNamee/CORBIS.

or Summer when they may suffer diseases from invasion of external pathogenic factors'.²⁰

The chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods' of the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' says:

People of the Metal type correspond to the colour white and their complexion is best when it is pure. They have the so-called Five Kinds of Squareness similar to the square structure of metal. They have the so-called Five Kinds of Moisture similar to the quality of metal under water. Individuals who deviate from the typical characteristic of Metal may not display square and regular features. If the muscles become thinner, their bones will show. These are all signs of exhaustion. People of the Metal type are quiet and calm when keeping still but fierce once in action. This mirrors the nature of metal which is silent and resilient. People of this kind are honest and upright as metal is pure and strong in quality. As officials, people of the Metal type are awesome and dignified just as metal is solemn.²¹

METAL TYPE

- Pale complexion
- Square face
- Small head
- Small shoulders and upper back
- Flat abdomen
- Strong voice

e) Water type

Observation

People of the Water type have a relatively dark complexion, wrinkles, a relatively big head, a round face and body, broad cheeks, narrow and small shoulders and a large abdomen. They keep their body in motion while walking and find it difficult to keep still. They have a long spine. The Water type is sympathetic and slightly laid-back. They are good negotiators and loyal to their work colleagues. They are aware and sensitive (Figs 1.16–1.18).

Clinical significance

People of the Water type are often in relatively good health in autumn and winter but not in spring or summer, when they may suffer diseases from invasion of external pathogenic factors.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 64 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

People of the Water type correspond to Shang Yu of the note Yu, which is one of the five notes and is related to the Water element. Their complexion is similar in colour to

*that of the Black Emperor, who was one of the heavenly emperors and represents North. They have a relatively dark complexion, wrinkled face, a big head, broad cheeks, small shoulders and a large abdomen. Their hands and feet are seldom at rest, and their body quivers while walking. They have a long spine. They like Autumn and Winter and dislike Spring and Summer.*²²

The chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods' in the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' says:

*People of the Water type correspond to the colour purple, and their complexion is best when it possesses lustre. Their face is fat and uneven just as the sea's surface is vast and rolling with waves. They have the so-called Five Kinds of Fatness just as water is wide. They have the so-called Five Kinds of Tenderness mirroring the moistness of water. They have the so-called Five Kinds of Smoothness resembling the clear nature of water. With a fat body build, people of the Water type tend to have a mobile body when they walk, mirroring the flowing movement of water. This kind of people have no respect for anybody nor do they fear; like water, they always run to a lower place. They pretend to be humble but actually tend to be deceivers; water, too, feels empty and lacking a solid structure.*²³

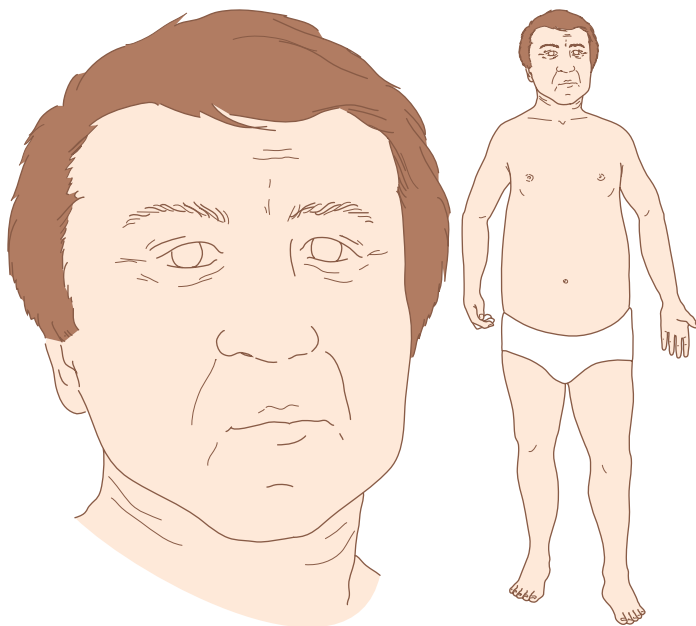


Figure 1.16. Water type.



Figure 1.17. Water-type face ©Ric Ergenbright/CORBIS.

Table 1.1 Summary of five element types

Element	Physical appearance	Personality
WOOD	Long face, tall and sinewy body	Intelligent, prone to worry, hard worker, versatile
FIRE	Red complexion, pointed chin, curly hair, small hands, walks fast	Quick, energetic, active, thinks too much, tendency to worry, good spirit of observation
EARTH	Yellowish complexion, round face, big head, wide jaws, large abdomen, strong thighs, walks without lifting feet	Calm, generous, steady, not overly ambitious
METAL	Pale complexion, square face, flat abdomen, strong voice, walks slowly and deliberately	Keen thinker, honest, upright, quiet, calm, rational, aptitude for leadership
WATER	Dark complexion, wrinkles, big head, round face and body, broad cheeks, large abdomen, long spine	Sympathetic, laid-back, good negotiator, loyal, sensitive



Figure 1.18. Water-type body.

WATER TYPE

- Dark complexion
- Wrinkly skin
- Large head
- Broad cheeks
- Narrow shoulders
- Large abdomen
- Long spine

Table 1.1 summarizes the characteristics of the Five Element types.

f) Clinical application of the Five Element types

i)

The first thing to note is that very few people will display all the characteristics of a 'pure' Element type as there will always be deviations from the ideal type caused by life influences. For example, the Wood type should have a tall and slender body; however, if they overeat they may develop a large abdomen. It is important, therefore, when evaluating an Element type, to take into account

all physical and behavioural characteristics of the patient. In the above example, if we drew a conclusion only from observation of the large abdomen, we might wrongly conclude that that person is an Earth type. Vice versa, an Earth type should have a relatively large abdomen and large thighs; however, if they lose weight due to a serious disease such as cancer, they may not have a large abdomen and thighs and we should pay attention to all the other physical characteristics.

ii)

Each Element type should have a strong point, and a weakness in that area indicates a poor prognosis. For example, the Wood type should have strong sinews: if they do not, it indicates a possible illness. The Fire type should walk fast and their strong point should be the Heart and blood vessels: for the Fire type to walk slowly indicates a potential problem. The Earth type should have strong muscles: if they do not it indicates a weakness in the Stomach and Spleen and the tendency to rheumatism. The Metal type should walk slowly and deliberately and their voice should be strong: if they walk fast and their voice is weak, it indicates a potential problem. The Water type should have strong Kidneys and may easily suffer from over-indulgence in sexual activity.

STRONG POINTS OF ELEMENT TYPES

- Wood: strong sinews
- Fire: strong heart and blood vessels
- Earth: strong muscles
- Metal: strong voice
- Water: strong Kidneys

iii)

Each person should be observed carefully and their Element type assessed so that deviations from the type can be noted. If a person has a certain trait which is unrelated to their particular type, the prognosis is worse than if the trait represents an exaggeration of a trait that is normal for that type. For example, the Fire type should walk fast: if they walk too fast, it is not so bad as a Metal type walking fast (as the Metal type should walk slowly and deliberately). Another example: if a Fire type has too loud a voice, it is not so bad as another type having a loud voice.

iv)

Finally, the prognosis is better if a person of a certain Element type suffers from a disharmony in the same

Element rather than in another Element. For example, it is better for a Wood type to suffer from a disharmony in this (for example, Liver-Qi stagnation) rather than in another Element (for example, Lung-Qi deficiency, Heart-Fire, Spleen-Yang deficiency or Kidney-Yin deficiency).

3. CLASSIFICATION OF BODY SHAPE ACCORDING TO PRE-NATAL AND POST-NATAL INFLUENCES

The body shapes according to pre-natal and post-natal influences are as follows:

- a) Body shape with strong pre-natal constitution
- b) Body shape with weak pre-natal constitution
- c) Body shape with strong post-natal Qi
- d) Body shape with weak post-natal Qi

a) Body shape with strong pre-natal constitution

Observation

People with a strong pre-natal constitution have a full and broad forehead and glabella (the frontal bone between the eyebrows). Their nose is long and wide. The area from the cheek to the front of the ear is wide with well-developed muscles. The lower jaw is high, thick and protruding. The ear is long, wide and regular-shaped with long ear-lobes. The eyes, nose, ears and mouth are well spaced and in the right proportion to each other. The philtrum (the vertical depression between the nose and mouth) is long. The complexion is normal in colour and lustrous. Breathing is even and smooth. The bones, muscles and skin are strong. The whole body is full of life.

Clinical significance

The above features indicate a good pre-natal constitution: when this person is ill, the disease is easy to treat. People with a strong pre-natal constitution generally have a long life and they are able to survive even serious illnesses. A strong pre-natal constitution often explains why one person can survive a serious disease such as cancer, whereas another person does not. A person with a strong constitution may also 'get away with' living in an unhealthy way and still live a long life. Of course, it is also possible to ruin a good pre-natal constitution through unhealthy living. A good pre-natal constitution is very often the crucial determining factor in prognosis.



Figure 1.19. Good pre-natal constitution.

To summarize, the main features indicating a good pre-natal constitution are as follows (Fig. 1.19):

- broad forehead and glabella
- long and wide nose
- full cheeks
- strong lower jaw
- long ears with long ear-lobes
- well-proportioned eyes, nose, ears and mouth
- long philtrum
- normal complexion with lustre
- even and smooth breathing
- firm muscles and skin

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 37 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

*A life as long as 100 years can be expected if the forehead and glabella are full and broad; the cheek and the area from the cheek to the front of the ear have well-developed muscles and protrude from the face, connecting a strong lower jaw and long ear lobes together; the eyes, nose, ears and mouth are well spaced and well proportioned; the face colour is normal. These people have abundant Qi and Blood. Their skin and muscles are strong. They respond well to acupuncture treatment.*²⁴

Chapter 54 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

*A person will have a long life if the five Yin organs are strong, blood circulates normally without obstruction, the skin is firm, the circulation of Nutritive and Defensive Qi is normal, breathing is regular, Qi circulates smoothly, and the six Yang organs transform and transport the food essences and body fluids smoothly to all parts of the body, maintaining its normal physiological functions...People with long life expectancy have long and deep nostrils. The muscles of the cheek and of the area from the cheek to the front of the ear are thick and high and well formed. The circulation of Nutritive and Defensive Qi is smooth. The upper, middle and lower parts of the face are in the right proportion, with well-developed and distinct muscles and prominent bones. People of this type can live out their normal life expectancy, or even up to the age of 100.*²⁵

Chapter 6 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

*People with a strong body build and relaxed skin, in whom Qi flows smoothly, will live a long life; while those with a strong body build but tense skin, in whom Qi stagnates, will die young. A strong build, a big pulse and a firm Exterior and Interior are signs of longevity; a strong build but a weak, empty pulse, a deficient Interior and a strong Exterior, with empty Qi, indicate a short life. A strong build but hollow, small zygomatic bones indicate weak bones and a short life expectancy; a strong build with well-developed muscles indicates long life; a strong build but with weak and under-developed muscles indicates a short life. These are all signs of pre-natal constitution which give an indication of life expectancy. As medical practitioners, we must understand the connection between body build and body shape so that we may have an idea of the patient's life expectancy.*²⁶

The chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods' in the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' says: *'If the forehead is high, the glabella is full, the nose is high and straight, the cheeks are full and the skeleton is well built, the person will have a long life expectancy.'*²⁷

b) Body shape with weak pre-natal constitution

Observation

The physical features of people with a weak pre-natal constitution are as follows: the eyes, nose, ears and mouth are close together; the forehead is narrow and the space between the eyebrows small; the nose is narrow with nostrils turned up and exposed; the philtrum is short; the cheek and the area between the cheek and the front of the ears are narrow; the ears are short,

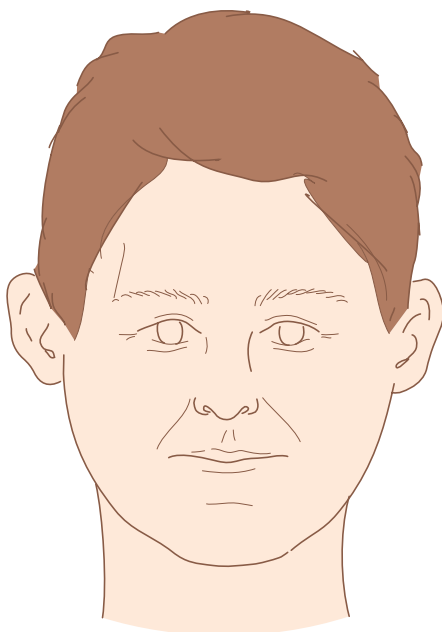


Figure 1.20. Weak pre-natal constitution.

small and turning outwards; the lower jaw is flat, sunken, low and narrow; breathing is coarse; and the skin is loose (Fig. 1.20).

Clinical significance

When the above-mentioned physical features are observed, they indicate that the person has a poor pre-natal constitution. These people will have a tendency to suffer from a deficiency of Qi, Blood, Yin or Yang. Compared to people with a strong pre-natal constitution, these people are more easily invaded by external pathogenic factors and, when this occurs, the treatment will be relatively more difficult.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 37 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'When the five senses are not sharp, the forehead and glabella are narrow, the nose is small, the area between the cheek and the front of the ears is narrow, the lower jaw is flat and the ears turn outwards, the pre-natal constitution is poor even though the complexion and colour may be normal. These people are intrinsically unhealthy, even more so when they are ill'.²⁸

Chapter 54 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

When the five Yin organs are weak, the nostrils are small and splay outwards, breathing is shallow, the cheek muscles are sunken, the pulse is thin and weak and the muscles are

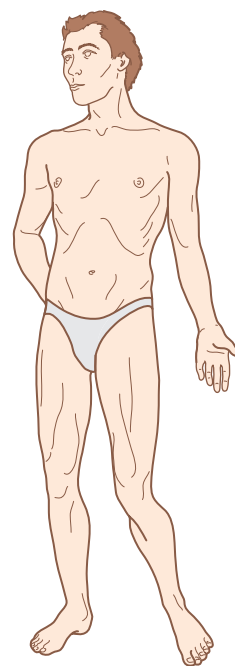


Figure 1.21. Strong post-natal Qi.

*loose, the person is easily invaded by Wind-Cold. As a result, Qi and Blood become more deficient, and the circulation in the vessels is impaired, which will predispose the person to further invasions of pathogenic factors.*²⁹

c) Body shape with strong post-natal Qi

Observation

Physical features indicating strong post-natal Qi are as follows: ruddy complexion with lustre, strong body build with solid muscles and firm, elastic skin, shiny hair with moisture, vigour and swift movements (Fig. 1.21).

Note that the features indicating strong pre-natal Qi relate more to the actual structure of the face, ears, nose, eyes and mouth and to the body build (i.e. inherited features), while the features indicating strong post-natal Qi relate to lustre, hair, muscles (i.e. features subject to the state of Qi and Blood).

Clinical significance

The above features indicate a good post-natal Qi. The Spleen and Stomach are strong, and they function properly. Qi, Blood, Yin and Yang are abundant and the body will not be easily attacked by external pathogenic factors. If there is any disease, it will be easy to treat.

Quotations from the classics

The chapter 'On the Pre-natal and Post-natal' of the 'Complete Works of Jing Yue' (*Jing Yue Quan Shu*, 1624) says:

If the pre-natal constitution is good, life will be long; if the pre-natal constitution is weak, life may be short. If people with a good pre-natal constitution take care of their post-natal Qi [with a good lifestyle and diet], they may live even longer; if people with a poor pre-natal constitution do not take care of their post-natal Qi [instead following a poor lifestyle and diet], their life may be even shorter. The build of the skeleton depends on the pre-natal constitution, while the build of the muscles depends on the post-natal Qi. The spirit [Shen] reflects the pre-natal constitution, while the complexion reflects the post-natal Qi. A deep colour of the complexion indicates long life, while a tender, light colour may indicate a short life. A strong, loud voice may indicate a long life, while a feeble voice may indicate a short one. A strong body build may indicate a long life while a weak body build may indicate a short one. One should also differentiate the mental state, paying attention to whether it is calm or restless: a calm mental state may indicate long life while a restless mental state may indicate a short one. As for the development of the body in youth, if a person appears weak when young, but grows stronger as he or she grows up, it is a good sign.³⁰

d) Body shape with weak post-natal Qi

Observation

The physical features of people with weak post-natal Qi are as follows: poor energy, haggard, sallow complexion, dry, withered hair, a thin, small build and loose skin without elasticity (Fig. 1.22).

Note that the features indicating weak pre-natal Qi relate more to the actual structure of the face, ears, nose, eyes and mouth and to the body build (i.e. inherited features), while the features indicating weak post-natal Qi relate to lustre, hair, muscles (i.e. features subject to the state of Qi and Blood).

Clinical significance

When the above-mentioned physical features are observed, it indicates that the person has weak post-natal Qi. The Spleen and Stomach are weak and Qi, Blood, Yin and Yang are deficient. The body will be easily invaded by pathogenic factors and any diseases will be of a deficient nature.



Figure 1.22. Weak post-natal Qi.

Quotations from the classics

The 'Complete Works of Jing Yue' says:

A person's life expectancy is determined by their pre-natal constitution. If the pre-natal constitution is good and the person receives good post-natal Qi, life expectancy may be long. If the pre-natal constitution is deficient, and the post-natal Qi is poor, life expectancy will be short. If people pay attention to this [i.e. influencing the pre-natal constitution through the post-natal nourishment], those with a short life expectancy can increase it. If people neglect these factors [i.e. they ruin their pre-natal constitution through poor post-natal Qi], those with a high life expectancy can decrease it. What we are born with [i.e. our pre-natal constitution] can exceed what we can reach by our efforts [i.e. our post-natal Qi]; conversely, what can be reached by our efforts [i.e. our post-natal Qi] can exceed what we were born with [i.e. our pre-natal constitution]. The pre-natal constitution is largely determined by that of the parents while the post-natal Qi is determined by our own efforts.³¹



Remember: Make an assessment of the constitution of the patient from the observation of the body shape. A strong or weak post- or pre-natal constitution gives us an immediate idea of the patient's general health and prognosis.

In Chapter 54 the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'When the 5 Zang are strong, the blood vessels harmonious, the muscles smooth, the Nutritive and Defensive Qi flow normally, the breath is peaceful and slow, Qi flows smoothly, the 6 Fu digest food normally, the body fluids spread to the whole body and the physiological functions are normal, the person can enjoy a long life'.³²

Chapter 54 also says: 'Huang Di asked: "Some people live to 100, how can one predict their life span?" Qi Bo said: "[The person who enjoys a long life has] long and deep nose, high and square chin like a wall, a smooth flow of Nutritive and Defensive Qi, the three areas of the face full and prominent with high bones and solid muscles. Such a person can live to 100 years".'³³

Chapter 37 of the "Spiritual Axis" (face reading) says:

If the nose is wide and big, the cheeks and tragus are full, the muscles of the face are thick like walls with a high chin, the person will live to 100 years.

If the forehead is narrow, the nose is small, the cheeks and tragus are weak, the muscles of the face are thin, the bones of the face flat, the ear lobes are slanting sideways, such people appear weak under normal conditions, let alone when they are ill.³⁴

Chapter 6 of the 'Spiritual Axis' deals with the factors affecting a long or short life, as shown in the following table.

Long life	Short life
Soft skin	Hard, dry skin
Vessels large and sturdy	Vessels small and weak
High cheekbones	Low cheekbones
Muscles sturdy	Muscles small ³⁵

4. CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO TYPE OF BODY BUILD

Chapters 38 and 59 of the 'Spiritual Axis' describe five types of body shape: robust, compact, muscular, thin and overweight. The physical characteristics of these five types generally coincide with those according to Yin and Yang mentioned above; for example, the robust type has a tendency to abundance of Yang, the thin type has a tendency to deficiency of Blood or Yin, the overweight type has a tendency to deficiency of Yang, etc.

The five body shapes described in these chapters of the 'Spiritual Axis' indicate inherited constitutional traits and not acquired ones; for example, the overweight type

is constitutionally overweight from an early age and not someone who becomes overweight through overeating and lack of exercise.

The classification of the body type according to body build is as follows:

- Robust type
- Compact type
- Muscular type
- Thin type
- Overweight type

a) Robust type

Observation

People of the robust type have large, firm muscles, smooth moist skin, a large abdomen, intolerance to heat and a preference for cold. Figure 1.23 shows a robust body type.

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned physical features indicate that the person has a constitutional abundance of Yang-Qi. Such

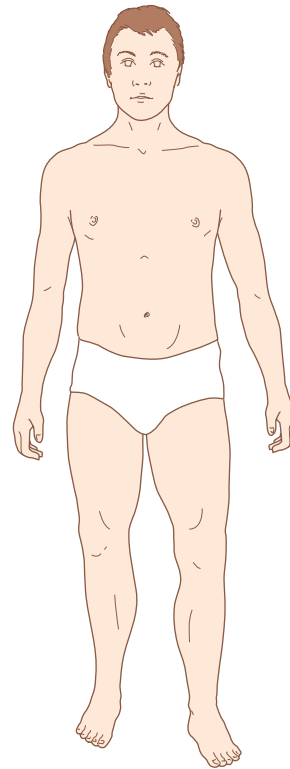


Figure 1.23. Robust body type.

a person has strong resistance to cold. These people will have a tendency to diseases of a Hot nature.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 59 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'Robust people are rich in Qi, and abundant Qi will keep the body warm. Therefore, they have strong resistance to cold'.³⁶

b) Compact type

Observation

People of the compact type have the following physical features: a small skeleton, compact solid muscles, thick fat under the skin and a small but full body build. Figure 1.24 shows a compact body type.

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned physical features indicate that the person has a smooth circulation of Qi and Blood, but he or she may also have a tendency to Qi and Blood deficiency. The diseases these people suffer from are either Cold in nature due to deficiency of Qi, or are Hot in nature due to deficiency of Blood.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 59 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The muscles of compact type of people are compact and solid, and their skin

is full and tight...People with a compact body build have compact muscles but a small body...Although people with a compact body build have some fat, their body build is not big'.³⁷

c) Muscular type

Observation

The physical features of people of the muscular type are as follows: large skeleton, plump and solid body build with the skin and muscles compacted tightly together. Figure 1.25 shows a muscular body type.

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned physical features indicate that the person has abundant Blood and harmonious Qi. Such a person will not be easily invaded by pathogenic factors.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 59 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'People of the muscular type have skin and muscles tightly compacted together...big, broad body size...and large limbs' and also 'People of the muscular type have abundant Qi, their body build is full and strong and their Qi is harmonious'.³⁸

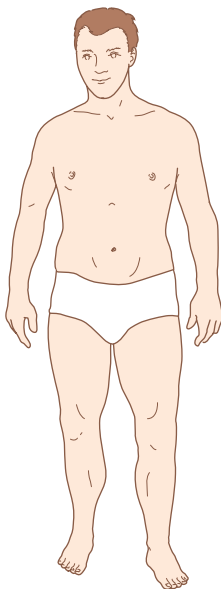


Figure 1.24. Compact body type.

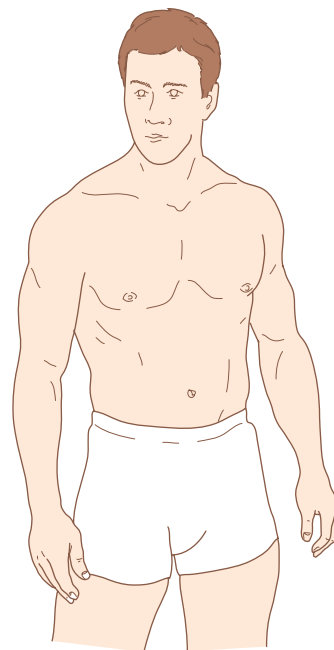


Figure 1.25. Muscular body type.

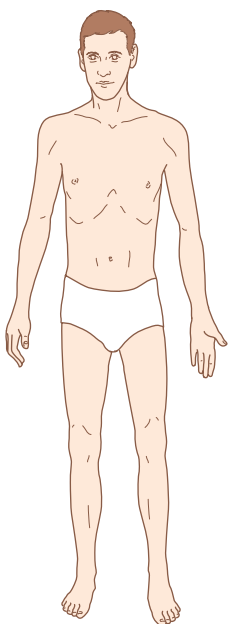


Figure 1.26. Thin body type.

d) Thin type

Observation

People of the thin type have the following physical features: thin body build, thin muscles and lips and a feeble voice. [Figure 1.26](#) shows a thin body type.

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned physical features indicate that the person's Qi and Blood circulate smoothly. Thin, pale people have a tendency to deficiency of Qi and Blood. In treatment, attention should be paid to tonifying and caution should be exercised when eliminating pathogenic factors. Thin people with a relatively dark complexion tend to suffer from Yin deficiency and possibly Empty Heat. In herbal treatment, warm and drying herbs (which have a tendency to injure Yin) should be used with caution.

Quotations from the classics

[Chapter 38](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'Thin type of people have thin pale skin as well as thin muscles and lips. They talk in a feeble voice. Their Blood is clear, and their Qi is smooth and slippery. Their Qi will dissipate easily, and their Blood will exhaust easily. Therefore, when needling

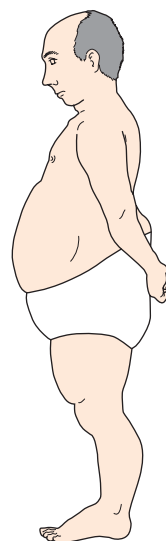


Figure 1.27. Overweight body type.

these people, insertion should be superficial and the needles should be withdrawn quickly'.³⁹

e) Overweight type

Observation

The overweight body type has loose skin and muscles, fat abdomen and thighs, moves slowly and often becomes breathless on walking.

Clinical significance

The overweight body type indicates either an actual condition of Damp-Phlegm with Qi deficiency or a predisposition to it. [Figure 1.27](#) shows an overweight type.

[Chapter 59](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' which addresses the three body types says: 'People can be divided into three body types: fat, greasy and muscular. People with firm, bulging muscles and full skin belong to the fat type; people with not firm muscles and loose skin belong to the greasy type; people with firm muscles and skin belong to the muscular type'.⁴⁰

5. CLASSIFICATION OF BODY SHAPE ACCORDING TO PAIN AND DRUG TOLERANCE

The body shapes indicating high or low tolerance to drugs and pain may be either constitutional or the result of post-natal influences.

The body shape may be classified according to drug and pain tolerance as follows:

- a) Body shape indicating high pain and drug tolerance
- b) Body shape indicating low pain and drug tolerance

a) Body shape indicating high pain and drug tolerance

Observation

People with a high drug (including herbs) and pain tolerance have certain physical features: the complexion is relatively dark; the body build is big and full with a strong skeleton; the tendons are soft; the muscles are loose and the skin firm.

Clinical significance

The above-mentioned physical features indicate that the person has strong drug and pain tolerance. When treating such a patient, the practitioner should be aware of the strong drug and pain tolerance and consider using medicines in relatively large doses.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 53 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

The Yellow Emperor asks Shao Yu: 'People's tendons and bones can be strong or weak, the muscles can be solid or loose, the skin can be thick or thin, the space between skin and muscles can be firm or weak, how does this affect people's tolerance of pain caused by needling and the burning of the moxa? People's stomach and intestines can be strong or weak, how does this affect their tolerance of medicinal drugs? I hope that you will explain this to me in detail.' Shao Yu answers: 'People with strong bones, soft tendons, relaxed muscles and thick skin, have a strong tolerance to pain. They can tolerate pain caused by needling as well as the burning of moxa.' The Yellow Emperor asks: 'How can you know that people can tolerate the burning pain of moxibustion?' Shao Yu answers: 'In the above-mentioned people who have strong bones, soft tendons, relaxed muscles and thick skin, if their complexion colour is relatively dark and their skeleton is well-built and strong, they can tolerate the burning pain of moxibustion. People with a thick stomach, dark complexion colour, solid skeleton and a large body build have sufficient Qi and Blood. They have a good tolerance to medicinal drugs'.⁴¹

Chapter 50 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

The Yellow Emperor says: 'The tolerance of pain does not depend only on the courage of a person. A person who is brave but intolerant of pain, will act without fear in a difficult and dangerous situation, but he or she cannot stand pain. Vice versa, a person who is cowardly but tolerant of pain, will be panic-stricken in a difficult and dangerous situation, but he or she will tolerate pain. A person who is brave and also tolerant of pain is not afraid in a difficult and dangerous situation and can also tolerate pain. A person who is timid and intolerant of pain will be overwhelmed by difficulties, danger or pain: these people will be so afraid that their heads spin and their vision is blurred; they lose their voices and become pale; they cannot look people in the eye and their hearts beat violently. They are scared to death. I have encountered all these kinds of people, but I do not know what the causes are. I would like to know the reasons.' Shao Yu answers: 'Tolerance to pain depends on whether the skin is thin or thick and the muscles are solid or weak and loose or tense. It cannot be determined by the bravery or cowardice of a person'.⁴²

Chapter 70 of the 'Simple Questions' says: 'For people who have strong drug tolerance, use medicines with strong flavours and medicinal action. For people who have weak drug tolerance, use medicines of mild flavour and medicinal action'.⁴³

b) Body shape indicating low pain and drug tolerance

Observation

The body shape indicating a low tolerance of pain and drugs is as follows: a thin body, solid muscles and thin, tender, loose skin.

Clinical significance

The above physical features indicate that the person has a relatively lower tolerance to pain and medicinal drugs. Such a patient tends to complain more about the illness and does not tolerate Chinese herbal medicines well; we should therefore use lower doses when treating him or her.

Quotations from the classics

Chapter 53 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'People with solid muscles and thin skin are intolerant of pain caused by needling and of the burning pain of moxibustion...People who are thin with a weak Stomach cannot tolerate the strong irritation of medicinal herbs'.⁴⁴



CHAPTER 1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- A person's body shape according to Yin and Yang and thereby the tendency of an individual towards certain pathologies.
- Body shape classification according to the Five Elements.
- The prognosis of an individual's disharmony based on constitutional element types.
- The interrelation between body shape and pre- and post-natal Qi.
- Body build classification.
- Pain and drug tolerance as influenced by post-natal traits and body shape.

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Observation of Mind, Spirit and Emotions

2

CHAPTER CONTENTS

The three aspects of the Spirit

The embodiment of the Spirit

The vitality of the Spirit

The lustre of the Spirit

The three conditions of the Spirit

Strong Spirit

Weak Spirit

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Strong Spirit and strong constitution

Weak Spirit and weak constitution

Weak Spirit and strong constitution

Strong Spirit and weak constitution

The Spirit and the emotions

Eyes

Complexion

Tongue

The Chinese character ‘Shen’ has many different meanings in Chinese medicine, the main one being, of course, Mind and Spirit. It should be remembered here that I translate as ‘Mind’ the ‘Shen’ pertaining to and residing in the Heart, whereas I translate as ‘Spirit’ the total of the Five Spiritual Aspects: that is, the Ethereal Soul (*Hun*) residing in the Liver, the Corporeal Soul (*Po*) residing in the Lungs, the Intellect (*Yi*) residing in the Spleen, the Will-Power (*Zhi*) residing in the Kidneys, and the Mind (*Shen*) itself residing in the Heart.



Remember: I translate the *Shen* of the Heart as ‘Mind’ and the complex of *Hun*, *Po*, *Yi*, *Zhi* and *Shen* itself as ‘Spirit’.

The Mind and Spirit are formed from the pre-natal Essences of the parents and are nourished by the

post-natal Essence of food and water taken in by the body. For example, Chapter 32 of the ‘Spiritual Axis’ says: ‘The Mind and Spirit result from the transformation of the Essence of food and water’.¹

Chapter 9 of the ‘Simple Questions’ says:

Heaven provides human beings with the five Qi [air] and Earth provides human beings with the five flavours [food]. The air is absorbed through the nose, and is stored in the Lungs and Heart. It ascends to make the complexion bright and lustrous and the voice sonorous. The food is taken through the mouth, and is stored in the Stomach and Intestines. After the food is digested and absorbed, the food Essence is delivered to the five Yin organs and therefore nourishes the Qi of the five Yin organs. When the Qi of the five Yin organs is in a state of harmony, the body can transform properly, body fluids are produced normally and the Mind and Spirit are formed.²

The Essence, Qi and Blood are the material foundation of the Mind and Spirit and, conversely, the Mind and Spirit are the external manifestation of Essence, Qi and Blood. Chapter 18 of the ‘Spiritual Axis’ says: ‘The Stomach is in the Middle Burner, it opens into the Upper Burner, it receives Qi, excretes the dregs, evaporates the fluids, transforming them into a refined essence. This pours upwards towards the Lungs and is transformed into Blood...Blood is the foundation of the Mind and Spirit’.³

All the above quotations highlight the relation between the Essence, Qi, Blood and the Mind and Spirit.

The ‘Great Dictionary of Chinese Medicine’ says: ‘Human life originates from the Essence. It is maintained by Qi and manifested through the Mind and Spirit. Qi, Blood and Essence are the material foundation of the Mind and Spirit. Therefore, when Qi, Blood and Essence are sufficient, the Mind and Spirit are healthy. If there is deficiency of Qi, Blood and Essence, the Mind and Spirit suffer’.⁴

Our physical features reflect the state of the Mind and Spirit and therefore the state of the Mind and Spirit can be gauged through the observation of the physical features.

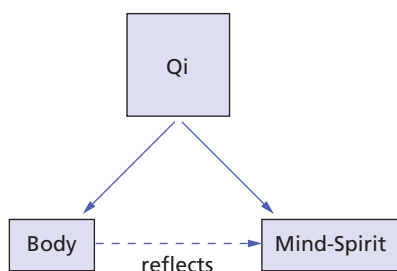


Figure 2.1. Relation between the body and the Mind and Spirit in Chinese medicine.

As we know, Qi is a subtle life force that is manifested simultaneously in the body in all its physiological activities and in the Mind and Spirit in its emotional and thinking activities (Fig. 2.1). For example, the pathological condition of Liver-Qi stagnation manifests with physical signs such as abdominal distension and simultaneously with emotional signs such as depression or mood swings.

Therefore, the Mind, Spirit and emotions reflect the state of the internal organs and of Qi, Blood and Essence and, vice versa, the state of Qi, Blood and Essence influences the Mind, Spirit and emotions. Observation of physical features such as the lustre of the complexion and hair, the vitality of the eyes, the tone of voice, the body movement, the pulse, the tongue, etc., help us to assess the state of the Mind, the vitality of the Spirit and the emotional state.

Observation of the Mind, Spirit and emotions will be discussed under the following headings:

1. The Three Aspects of the Spirit
 - a) The Embodiment of the Spirit
 - b) The Vitality of the Spirit
 - c) The Lustre of the Spirit
2. The Three Conditions of the Spirit
 - a) Strong Spirit
 - b) Weak Spirit
 - c) False Spirit
3. The Spirit and Constitution
 - a) Strong Spirit and Strong Constitution
 - b) Weak Spirit and Weak Constitution
 - c) Weak Spirit and Strong Constitution
 - d) Strong Spirit and Weak Constitution
4. The Spirit and the Emotions
 - a) Eyes
 - b) Complexion
 - c) Tongue

1. THE THREE ASPECTS OF THE SPIRIT

When observing and assessing the Spirit of a person, we should examine three separate aspects:

- a) the embodiment of the Spirit
- b) the vitality of the Spirit
- c) the lustre of the Spirit

a) The embodiment of the Spirit

Observation

The embodiment of the Spirit represents the outward physical manifestation of the Spirit in the body. If the embodiment of the Spirit is strong, a person will have good energy, a strong and solid body build, well-developed muscles, eyes with lustre and a lively expression, agile movements and keen reflexes. The whole body appears to be full of life.

If the embodiment of the Spirit is weak, a person will have a weak or emaciated body, lack of energy, eyes without lustre, a dull complexion, slow movements, unsteady walk and slow reflexes. The whole body seems to lack vitality. In severe cases, there will also be mental confusion or lethargy, wasting muscles and a weak body with dull skin (Fig. 2.2).

Clinical significance

The embodiment of the Spirit is the reflection of the Spirit in the body. If the embodiment of the Spirit is strong, it means that Yin, Yang, Qi and Blood are still abundant, pathogenic factors are not so strong, and there is no severe impairment of the internal organs yet. If the embodiment of the Spirit is weak, it shows that pathogenic factors are strong, Upright Qi is exhausted and the internal organs are depleted.

b) The vitality of the Spirit

Observation

The vitality of the Spirit is its manifestation in the general vitality of a person; that is, the 'energy' radiated by a person that reflects his or her Spirit. Observation of the vitality of the Spirit is an integral part of the observation of the Spirit. If the vitality of the Spirit is vibrant, then a person will have a clear mind, high energy, a strong voice, regular breathing, clear thinking

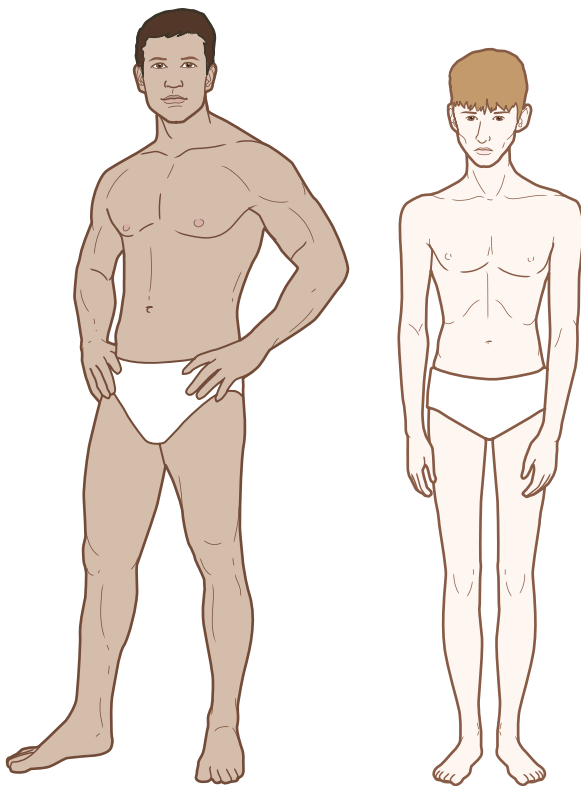


Figure 2.2. Embodiment of the Spirit.

and quick reflexes. If the vitality of the Spirit is dull, a person will have low energy, a weak voice, dull expression, lethargy, apathy and in severe cases mental confusion.

Clinical significance

The vitality of the Spirit reflects the state of the Mind and Spirit, in addition to the relative strength of Qi and Blood of the internal organs and that of pathogenic factors. If the vitality of the Spirit of a person is vibrant, Qi and Blood are abundant, the internal organs are strong, pathogenic factors are weak and the disease is mild. If the vitality of the Spirit is dull, it indicates that Qi and Blood are deficient, the internal organs weak, pathogenic factors strong and the disease severe.

The chapter 'Key to the Four Diagnostic Methods' of *'The Golden Mirror of Medicine'* says: 'In the beginning of a disease, the state of the Spirit is important. The reason is that if the Spirit is strong at the beginning of a disease,

it means that pathogenic factors cannot defeat the Upright Qi, as it is still strong. If the Spirit is dull, it shows that the Upright Qi cannot resist pathogenic factors as it is deficient'.⁵

c) The lustre of the Spirit

Observation

The lustre of the Spirit refers to the lustre of the complexion, hair and eyes: the Spirit is reflected in their lustre and observation of them is an essential part of the observation of the Spirit. If the lustre of the Spirit is bright, a person will have a normal, glowing complexion, clear sparkling eyes, shining hair, a lively expression and lustrous, supple skin. If the lustre of the Spirit is dull, a person will have a haggard complexion, withered, lifeless hair, dull eyes and a listless expression and dry, withered skin.

The chapter 'On Compulsory Observation of the Spirit while Observing a Disease' in the book 'Origin of Medicine' (Yi Yuan, 1861) says: 'No matter what the colour is, there should be lustre [shen]. In lustre, one can differentiate light and body. 'Light' refers to a bright appearance on the surface, while 'body' refers to the moisture below the surface of the skin. Light has no form and reflects Yang and Qi. Body has a form and reflects Yin and Blood. If there is no abnormality of Qi and Blood, and Yin and Yang are in harmony, the lustre will have normal light and body'.⁶

Clinical significance

The lustre of the Spirit reflects the state of the internal organs and the strength of Qi and Blood. If the lustre of the Spirit is rich, it indicates that the internal organs are functioning normally and Qi and Blood are abundant. When diseases occur, they are mild and the prognosis is good. If the lustre of the Spirit is lacking, it denotes that Qi and Blood are deficient, the internal organs are weak, pathogenic factors are strong and the prognosis is poor.

THE THREE ASPECTS OF THE SPIRIT

- The **'embodiment'** of the Spirit is the outward manifestation of the Spirit in the body itself.
- The **'vitality'** of the Spirit is the outward manifestation of the Spirit as it is reflected in the **'energy'** of the person
- The **'lustre'** of the Spirit is the outward manifestation of the Spirit as it is reflected in the lustre of the eyes and complexion.

2. THE THREE CONDITIONS OF THE SPIRIT

When examining the state of the Mind and Spirit, there are three basic conditions:

- a) Strong Spirit
- b) Weak Spirit
- c) False Spirit

a) Strong Spirit

Observation

The signs of a strong Spirit are: sparkling, clear eyes, a lively expression, a lustrous complexion, a clear and alert mind, keen reflexes, good energy, enthusiasm, normal breathing, a clear, ringing voice and agile body movements. This person will have high spirits, a positive approach to life, a stable personality, strong will-power, a clear sense of direction in life and a keen intellect (Fig. 2.3).

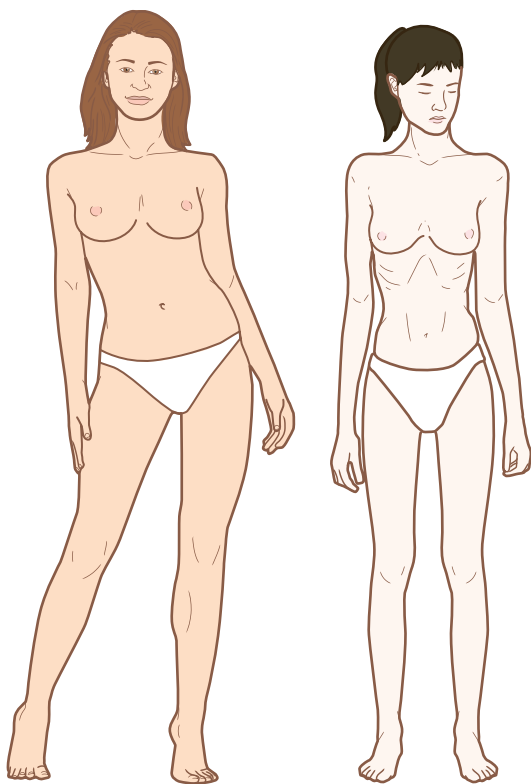


Figure 2.3. Strong and weak Spirit.

Clinical significance

The above signs indicate that the person has a strong and healthy Mind and Spirit and, whatever problem that person might develop, the prognosis is good. The presence of a strong Spirit also means that that person will not suffer from emotional problems or, if these occur, he or she will not be overwhelmed by them.



CLINICAL NOTE

A strong spirit often explains how someone could have a serious disease and yet go on living for a long time.

b) Weak Spirit

Observation

The signs of a weak Spirit are listlessness, lack of enthusiasm, dull eyes without sparkle, a complexion without lustre, shallow breathing, a weak voice, slow body movements, confused thinking, a tongue without 'spirit' (*shen*) and possibly with a Heart crack, and a pulse without a wave. The person will suffer from apathy, depression, lack of will-power, confusion about their path in life and a slow intellect (see Fig. 2.3).

Chapter 17 of the 'Simple Questions' describes the manifestation of a weak Spirit by observation of the head and eyes: *'The five Yin organs house the Spirit; they are essential for the body to be strong. The head is the residence of the Spirit: if the head droops and the eyes are deep-socketed and dull, it means that the Spirit is exhausted'*.⁷

The chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods' of 'The Golden Mirror of Medicine' also discusses the manifestations of Lack of Spirit by observing the eyes, speech and mental condition of the patient and it says: *'The Spirit is housed in the Heart. It is not substantial or visible but it manifests in the eyes. If the eyes look dull, it means that the Spirit is exhausted: it indicates a poor prognosis. If the eyes are bright and clear, it denotes that the Spirit is vital and the body is free of disease...If there is delirium and incoherent speech, it indicates that the Spirit is gone'*.⁸

Clinical significance

When the Spirit is weak all the organs are affected, the Essence and Qi suffer and, whatever disease the person might have, the prognosis is less good than in a person with a strong Spirit. A weak Spirit also means that that

person is more prone to emotional problems or that he or she will be more easily overwhelmed by them.

c) False Spirit

The condition of 'False Spirit' usually appears only during the course of a severe, chronic disease. This occurs when a severely ill patient suddenly appears revitalized and in high spirits: this is called 'False Spirit' and it is usually a poor prognostic sign. The key factor in determining that this is a false appearance of the Spirit is the suddenness of the improvement: however, if the Spirit of a chronically ill patient improves slowly and gradually over several days, that is a good sign.

Observation

The typical manifestations of the False Spirit appear in the course of a severe chronic disease and they are as follows: the patient suddenly seems to be vigorous with a clear look in the eyes, he or she talks incessantly and wants to meet family members, the appetite improves suddenly and the complexion suddenly becomes bright red, almost as if the patient were wearing make-up. There is a precise description of the False Spirit in the book 'Chinese Medicine Diagnosis':

The False Spirit indicates the momentary improvement in energy of a patient during a severe, chronic disease: it is not a good sign but an omen of death. The manifestations of the False Spirit are as follows: in a patient suffering from a severe, chronic disease and previously suffering from a weak Spirit, suddenly the energy seems better, the eyes become bright, the patient suddenly talks a lot and wants to meet family members, the voice, previously feeble, suddenly becomes clear and loud, the complexion, previously dark, suddenly becomes bright red and the appetite suddenly comes back. These manifestations are due to the extreme exhaustion of the Essence and Qi. In such a circumstance, Yin fails to restrain Yang so that Yang floats outwards and upwards, causing the false appearance of an improvement. In ancient times, people compared it to the last flicker of a fading oil lamp or the last radiance of the setting sun. It is a dangerous sign indicating the separation of Yin and Yang.⁹

Clinical significance

If the manifestations of the False Spirit appear, it means that the Upright Qi is collapsing, and Yin and Yang are about to separate. Such patients often die within a short time.

3. THE SPIRIT AND THE CONSTITUTION

When observing the mental and emotional state of a person, it is important first of all to assess the relative strength of the Spirit compared to that of the constitution, both the pre-natal and post-natal, as described above. The Spirit and the constitution are both reflections of the Essence and Qi of the body, the former in the mental-spiritual sphere and the latter in the physical sphere. Because of the close connection between the Spirit and the constitution of a person, generally a strong pre- and post-natal constitution is accompanied by a strong Spirit; conversely, a weak pre- and post-natal constitution is generally accompanied by a weak Spirit. However, there may be cases in which there is a divergence between these two aspects; for example, when a person has a strong pre- and post-natal constitution but a weak Spirit, or vice versa.

An assessment of the relative strength of the constitution and the Spirit is helpful in forming a prognosis which will be discussed below. There are four possible situations:

- a) Strong Spirit and strong constitution
- b) Weak Spirit and weak constitution
- c) Weak Spirit and strong constitution
- d) Strong Spirit and weak constitution

a) Strong Spirit and strong constitution

Observation

A person with a strong Spirit and strong constitution will have solid muscles, a lustrous normal complexion, a vigorous expression in shining eyes, a strong body, lustrous hair, agile movement and keen reflexes; on a mental-spiritual level, this person will have high spirits, a positive approach to life, a stable personality, strong will-power, a clear sense of direction in life and a keen intellect.

Clinical significance

The above physical and mental characteristics indicate both a good constitution and a strong Spirit; the internal organs of such a person are strong and function normally, Qi and Blood are abundant and the Mind and Spirit are healthy. The body will not be easily invaded by pathogenic factors. Even if diseases occur, they can be easily cured.

Chapter 19 of the 'Simple Questions' says: 'If the Upright Qi and the body build of a patient are both strong, any disease will be easy to treat. If the complexion is lustrous and bright, the patient will recover soon'.¹⁰ Chapter 20 of the 'Simple Questions' says: 'If the body build and the Upright Qi are both strong, the patient will survive'.¹¹

b) Weak Spirit and weak constitution

Observation

A person with a weak Spirit and a weak constitution will be listless with an emaciated body build, a haggard complexion, dull eyes, withered hair, a feeble voice; from a mental-emotional point of view, he or she will suffer from apathy, depression, lack of will-power, a confusion about their path in life and a slow intellect.

Clinical significance

The above characteristics indicate that the patient has both a weak Spirit and a weak constitution and there will be a deficiency of Yin, Yang, Qi or Blood. Any illness that such a person suffers from will tend to be long-lasting and chronic and the body will be easily invaded by external pathogenic factors. The weak Spirit will also hamper an improvement in the physical condition. A simultaneous weakness of both the Spirit and the constitution generally indicates a poor prognosis.

c) Weak Spirit and strong constitution

Observation

A person with a weak Spirit and a strong constitution will have solid muscles, a strong body, lustrous hair, agile movement and keen reflexes, large bones, a brisk walk, but dull eyes without sparkle, a haggard complexion without lustre and a weak voice. From a mental-emotional point of view, this person will tend to suffer from apathy, depression, lack of will-power, a confusion about their path in life and a slow intellect.

Clinical significance

The combination of a weak Spirit and a strong constitution is usually seen in patients who are born with a strong pre-natal constitution but whose Mind and Spirit are affected by life events. Although the treatment of such patients is more difficult than it would be if they had a strong Spirit, their strong constitution means that the prognosis is still relatively good and that the Mind and Spirit can recover their balance.

Chapter 19 of the 'Simple Questions' says: 'If the body build is strong and the Upright Qi and Mind weak, the disease is difficult to treat. If the complexion is dark without lustre, the disease is difficult to cure'.¹²

d) Strong Spirit and weak constitution

Observation

A person with a strong Spirit and a weak constitution will suffer from chronic diseases and will have an emaciated body build, listlessness, a haggard complexion, dull eyes, withered hair, a feeble voice, coarse breath but a clear, loud voice and eyes with lustre; from the mental-emotional point of view, the patient will have high spirits, a positive approach to life, a stable personality, strong will-power, a clear sense of direction in their life and a keen intellect.

Clinical significance

The combination of a weak constitution and a strong Spirit may seem contrary to the fundamental tenet of Chinese medicine that sees the body and the Mind as an integrated whole; in fact, in general, a weak pre- and post-natal constitution will be accompanied by a weak Spirit. However, there are exceptions to this as some people seem to be able to maintain a strong Spirit despite a poor constitution.

The prognosis in this case is better than in the previous case because the strong Spirit, helped by treatment, is able to harness the healing powers of the body.

4. THE SPIRIT AND THE EMOTIONS

The emotional state of the patient is gauged primarily from observation of the eyes, the complexion and the tongue. The observation of these features must of course be closely integrated with the interrogation, listening to the voice and palpation of the pulse. The following aspects will be discussed:

- Eyes
- Complexion
- Tongue

Eyes

Observation of the eyes to gauge the emotional state of the patient is based primarily on observation of the lustre and control of the eyes.

Lustre of the eyes refers to the brilliance, sparkle, glitter and vitality of the normal eye. Eyes with lustre indicate a normal state of the Mind and Spirit and, generally speaking, the absence of serious emotional problems. Eyes without lustre are dull, lack vitality and sparkle and look as if they were covered by a mist: this always indicates emotional problems of some nature. The extent to which the eyes lack lustre is directly related to the duration and intensity of the emotional problems: that is, the duller the eyes, the deeper and more long-standing are the emotional problems.

Control of the eyes refers to the gaze and movement of the eyes. If a person is able to fix their gaze and the eyes do not move but neither are they too fixed, they have 'control'. If a person has a shifty gaze, if the eyes move too much or if they are fixed in a stare, they are 'uncontrolled'. Eyes without control indicate a relatively serious disturbance of the Mind and Spirit.



CLINICAL NOTE

The lustre of the eyes is the most important and reliable sign of the state of the Mind (Shen) and of the emotional state. After the patient sits down for the consultation, I observe the eyes to see if they have lustre or not. If the eyes lack lustre, it indicates that the patient is suffering from emotional problems: the less the lustre, the more long-standing the emotional problems.

Complexion

A complexion with lustre is bright, moist and shining, while a lustreless complexion is dark, dull and somewhat dry. It is important to note that the lustre of the complexion is a diagnostic feature separate from the colour of the complexion; for example, an abnormal yellow complexion could be with or without lustre.

A complexion with lustre indicates that the Mind and Spirit are relatively unaffected by emotional problems while a complexion without lustre indicates the presence of emotional problems. Similarly as for the eyes, the lack of lustre of a complexion is directly related to the intensity and duration of emotional problems: the duller the complexion, the deeper and more long-standing the emotional problems.

Tongue

One of the main features to look for in the tongue to determine whether the patient is affected by emotional

problems or not is the presence or absence of a Heart crack.

A Heart crack on the tongue is relatively narrow and it extends throughout the whole length of the tongue to the border of the tip. Such a crack indicates the tendency to emotional problems and the deeper the crack, the more intense the emotional problems.

A second pathological sign to look for on the tongue in emotional problems is a Red tip. Emotional stress generally leads to Qi stagnation and with time this leads to some Heat. As all emotions affect the Heart, emotional stress frequently manifests with a Red tip of the tongue, which reflects a certain degree of Heart-Heat. The redder the tip the more intense the emotional problems and a swelling and red points on the tip indicate an even more severe emotional problem.

The observations of these three features – eyes, complexion and tongue – should be closely integrated and each sign should be checked against those of the other two features to give us an idea of the intensity and duration of the emotional problems.

In terms of time scale, when a person is subject to emotional stress, the eyes and their lustre will be the first feature to change, the complexion the second and the tongue the last (although this is just a general rule and there may be variations in practice). Therefore, for example, if the eyes lack lustre but the complexion has lustre and the tip of the tongue is not red, it indicates that the emotional problems are of a relatively short duration; if, on the contrary, the eyes and complexion lack lustre and the tongue has a Red tip and a deep Heart crack, it indicates that the emotional problems suffered by the patient are very deep and long-standing.

As indicated above, when diagnosing the emotional state of the patient, interrogation and observation must also be integrated with palpation of the pulse. In terms of the time scale, the pulse will actually be the first to change.

To summarize, therefore, the time scale of the changes observed in emotional problems is as follows:

1. pulse
2. eyes
3. complexion
4. tongue

The observation of the lustre of the eyes is discussed also in [Chapter 6](#), while that of the complexion is discussed in [Chapter 3](#).



CHAPTER 2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- 'Mind' pertains to the Heart, while 'Spirit' refers to all the Spiritual Aspects of the five Yin organs.
- The state of the Mind and Spirit reflects the health of our physical features, the state of the internal organs, Qi, Blood and Essence, and vice versa.
- There are three aspects of the Spirit that need to be assessed: its physical manifestation, a person's vitality, and the lustre of the complexion, hair and eyes.
- There are three conditions of the Spirit that need to be considered: whether it is strong, weak or false.
- Consideration of the strength of the Spirit combined with a person's constitution gives an indication of a person's tendency to disharmony and its prognosis.
- A person's emotional state is gauged initially through observation of their eyes, complexion and tongue.

END NOTES

1. 1981 *Spiritual Axis (Ling Shu Jing 灵枢经)*, People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 72.
2. 1979 *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Simple Questions (Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen 黄帝内经素问)*, People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 67.
3. *Spiritual Axis*, p. 52.
4. Cited in Zhang Shu Sheng 1995 *Great Treatise of Diagnosis by Observation in Chinese Medicine (中华医学望诊大全)*, Shanxi Science Publishing House, Taiyuan, p. 65.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
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7. *Simple Questions*, p. 100.
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Observation of Complexion Colour

3

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Normal complexion colour

White complexion colour

Yellow complexion colour

Red complexion colour

Bluish/greenish complexion colour

Dark complexion colour

Purple complexion colour

In this chapter, the observation of complexion colours is discussed according to the following sections:

1. Introduction
 - a) Dominant Colours
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h) Changes In Complexion Colour During a Disease

i) Complexion Colours and Emotions

3. Complexion Colours

a) Normal Complexion Colour

b) White Complexion Colour

c) Yellow Complexion Colour

d) Red Complexion Colour

e) Bluish/Greenish Complexion Colour

f) Dark Complexion Colour

g) Purple Complexion Colour

1. INTRODUCTION

The colour and lustre of the complexion are the outward manifestations of the internal organs and of Yin, Yang, Qi and Blood. If the internal organs function normally and if Yin, Yang, Qi and Blood are abundant and balanced, the complexion will have normal colour and proper lustre; conversely, when Qi, Blood, Yin and Yang are weakened and the internal organs affected, the complexion acquires an abnormal colour.

The chapter 'On Observation of the Colour' in 'Principle and Prohibition for the Medical Profession' (Yi Men Fa Lu) says: *'When the five Yin organs are exhausted, the complexion colour becomes dark and lustreless...So the complexion colour is like a flag of the Spirit, and the Yin organs are the residences of the Spirit. When the Spirit is gone, the Yin organs are worn out, and the complexion colour becomes dark and lustreless'*.¹

As the above passage indicates clearly, observation of complexion colour is a very important diagnostic tool to assess the condition not only of Qi, Blood, Yin and Yang and of the internal organs, but also of the Mind and Spirit. Indeed from a Five-Element perspective, the facial complexion as a whole is a manifestation of the Heart and therefore the Mind and Spirit; this should never be forgotten in practice. Thus, if a woman has a very dull, sallow complexion it does indicate a Spleen-Qi deficiency and Dampness and possibly also Blood deficiency but, at

the same time, it also indicates that the Mind and Spirit are affected and suffering.

Yu Chang in 'Principles of Medical Practice' (1658) calls the complexion the 'banner of the Mind and Spirit' and he says: *'When the Mind and Spirit are flourishing, the complexion is glowing; when the Mind and Spirit are declining, the complexion withers. When the Mind is stable the complexion is florid...'*²

The normal complexion should have 'lustre' and 'moisture'. 'Lustre' means that the complexion colour should be bright, glowing and with a shine to it; 'moisture' means that the complexion should look moist and the skin firm, indicating that there is moisture underneath it. There is a correspondence between these two aspects of the complexion and two of the attributes of the normal pulse: lustre of the complexion corresponds to the Spirit of the pulse, while moisture of the complexion corresponds to Stomach-Qi of the pulse. Thus, we can say that if the complexion has lustre there is Spirit, if it has moisture there is Stomach-Qi.

Observation of the complexion must be closely linked to the feeling of the pulse. The pulse shows the state of Qi, the complexion the state of the Mind and Spirit. If the pulse shows changes but the complexion is normal, it indicates that the problem is recent. If both the pulse and the complexion show pathological changes, it indicates that the problem is long-standing.

The lustre of the complexion should also be checked against the lustre of the eyes. A change in the complexion always indicates a deeper or more long-standing problem. For example, a sustained period of overwork and inadequate sleep may cause the eyes to lack lustre (and the pulse to be Weak); if the complexion has not changed, this is not too serious and the person can recover easily by resting. If, however, the eyes lack lustre and the complexion is dull, without lustre, or dark, it indicates that the problem is not transient but deeper-rooted.

Thus, in terms of time scale, the pulse changes first, the eyes second and the complexion last. Accordingly, if the pulse is affected but the eyes and the complexion are not, the problem is very recent; if pulse and eyes are affected (lacking in lustre), the problem is older (some months); if the pulse, eyes and complexion are all affected, the problem is even older (over one year).

a) Dominant colours

The normal complexion colour varies, of course, according to racial group but also according to Element types

as described in [Chapter 1](#). Wood types have a subtle greenish hue to their complexion; Earth types a subtle yellowish hue; Fire types a red hue; Metal types a white hue; and Water types a dark hue.

Therefore, the normal complexion colour is determined by race and pre-natal influences and, in health, remains the same throughout life. In disease, the complexion colour becomes pathological and will vary, obviously according to the racial group, but also according to Element type; for example, a pathological yellow colour in someone of the Wood type will be subtly different from that in someone of the Fire type. Such differences in pathological colour are, of course, even more evident in different racial groups; for example, the paleness of a Caucasian patient will differ from that of an Asian patient.

The basic inherited complexion colours, determined by race and Element type, are called 'dominant colours'. The chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods' in 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (Yi Zong Jin Jian) says: *'The colours of the five Yin organs manifest in people according to their body shape based on the Five Elements. Such colours never change throughout life. They are known as dominant colours.'*³

In addition, there are other factors related to environment and season that influence the complexion colour. Environmental conditions and lifestyle have an important influence on complexion colour so that what is a normal complexion colour for one person may not be so for another, even within the same racial group and Element type: this should be taken into account when diagnosing patients. For example, the normal complexion of a farmer who spends most of his life outdoors will obviously be different from that of an office worker: inevitably, the farmer's 'normal' complexion will be redder than the office worker's.

[Chapter 12](#) of the 'Simple Questions' discusses environmental influences on the complexion:

*The East is where Qi of all kinds of life in nature starts. It is an area close to seas and water and abounds in fish and salt. People who live in the East eat a lot of fish, and like salty food. Therefore they often have a relatively dark complexion and loose structures between the complexion and muscles. The South is where all kinds of life in nature grow vigorously, and where Yang flourishes. It is lower terrain, and has poor water and soil. There is often fog. People who live in the South like sour-flavoured and fermented food. Therefore, they often have a relatively red complexion and dense structures between the complexion and muscles.'*⁴

Obviously, the geographical references in the above passage refer to China and the dietary references refer to ancient China; however, the principle that the environment influences the complexion colour is still valid.

DOMINANT COLORS

The dominant colour of the complexion is determined by Element type, race and environmental influences.

b) Guest colours

'Guest' colours are those appearing on the Connecting channels of the face and limbs. The colours of the Yin Connecting channels follow those of the Main channels; that is, if the Main channels manifest with red colour, the Yin Connecting will also manifest with a red colour. The Yang Connecting channels are on the Yang surfaces and, being more superficial, they are more readily influenced by seasonal factors. Thus, the complexion may assume a certain colour due to the seasonal and climatic influence on the Yang Connecting channels and such colour may contradict what one might expect from the Element type or pathological condition. For example, a patient with a pathological condition of the Heart (such as Heat) should have a reddish complexion: if the seasonal and climatic influence (e.g. Spring) on the Yang Connecting channels predominates the complexion may instead be greenish. This is called 'guest' colour and we should be able to recognize it in order to explain the anomaly.

Chapter 57 of the 'Simple Questions' says:

The Yellow Emperor asks: 'The Connecting channels are exposed to the exterior and manifest with five different colours which are green, yellow, red, white and black. What is the reason?' Qi Bo answers, 'The main channels have their regular colours, but the colours of the Connecting channels change according to the four seasons.' The Yellow Emperor asks, 'What are the normal colours of the main channels?' Qi Bo answers, 'Red for the Heart, white for the Lungs, green for the Liver, yellow for the Spleen and black for the Kidneys.' The Yellow Emperor asks, 'Do the colours of the Yin and Yang Connecting channels correspond to the regular colours of the related main channels?' Qi Bo answers, 'The colours of the Yin Connecting channels correspond to the regular colours of their related main channels, while those of the Yang Connecting channels change in accordance with the four seasons. In cold weather, the circulation of Qi and Blood slows down and there is often a green or black colour. In warm and hot weather, Qi and Blood circulation is free and

smooth, and there is usually a yellow or red colour. All these are normal phenomena, indicating the body is in a normal condition'.⁵

When the above passage talks about the 'normal colours of the main channels', it refers to the five main pathological colours of the face which are produced by the influence of the main Yin channels: for example, a pathological condition of the main channel of the Heart may produce a reddish complexion (of course this is seen strictly from a Five-Element point of view as, for example, Heart-Blood deficiency would manifest with a pale rather than red complexion).

The passage then explains that while the colour of the Yin Connecting channels accords with the predominant face colour, that of the Yang Connecting channels is influenced by the seasons and climate. Bearing in mind that the limbs are richly supplied by the Yang Connecting channels, one needs to observe the colour of the limbs as well as the face to gauge the seasonal influence of these channels. Such colours, compared with those deriving from racial group and Element type, are temporary and reversible and are known as the 'guest colours' which are not pathological.

It is important to differentiate between 'guest colours' due to environmental and climatic influences and actual abnormal colours due to pathological conditions.

GUEST COLOURS

The guest complexion colours are influenced by seasonal and climatic factors.

c) Clinical significance of complexion colour and lustre

Observation of the complexion colour and lustre helps us to determine the pathology, location, nature and prognosis of a disease. When observing the complexion colour, attention should be paid to distinguishing the dominant colours, the guest colours and the abnormal colours. It is, of course, necessary to refer to the pulse, tongue and symptoms and also to take into account the patient's Element type.

For example, if someone of the Wood type has a slightly greenish complexion, this is in keeping with that type; if this person's complexion develops a reddish tinge, (perhaps a superficial redness over the underlying greenish colour) during the summer, this is a 'guest' colour and is also normal. However, if the same person's

complexion is very red and 'deep' (see below), it indicates not a 'guest' colour but a pathological condition of Heat.

2. OBSERVATION OF DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF COMPLEXION COLOUR

The main aspects of complexion colour to observe are:

- a) Superficial or deep colour
- b) Distinct or obscure colour
- c) Scattered or concentrated colour
- d) Thin or thick colour
- e) Lustrous or lustreless colour
- f) Conforming or opposing colours
- g) Prognosis according to complexion colour
- h) Changes in complexion colour during a disease
- i) Complexion colours and emotions.

a) Superficial or deep colour

Observation

The differentiation between superficial and deep colour is based on the 'depth' of the complexion's colour. A colour is defined as 'superficial' when it is seen clearly on the surface of the complexion, while it is defined as 'deep' when it appears to be a level below the surface (Figs. 3.1 and 3.2).

Chapter 49 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The five colours are present in certain areas of the face. Recognizing whether the colours are superficial or deep helps us to understand the shallow or deep location of the pathogenic factors'.⁶ The chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods' in the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (Yi Zong Jin Jian) says: 'The deep colour is relatively dark. It indicates that diseases are

deep in the Interior. If it is also obscure and lustreless, it indicates that diseases are chronic and severe. The superficial colour is relatively light. It indicates that diseases are on the Exterior. If it is also bright and lustrous, it indicates that diseases are mild and newly-occurring'.⁷

The chapter 'Outline of the Ten Methods for Recognizing Qi' in the book 'Wang Zhen Zun Jing' says:

'The superficial colour is shown on the complexion, while the deep colour is hidden underneath the complexion. The superficial colour indicates Exterior diseases, and the deep colour indicates Interior diseases. If the colour is first superficial and later becomes deep, it reveals the movement of a disease from the Exterior to the Interior. If the colour is first deep and later becomes superficial, it reflects the movement of the disease from the Interior to the Exterior'.⁸

Clinical significance

If the abnormal complexion colour is superficial and light, it indicates that the disease is mild and is located in the Exterior or in the Yang organs. It can be easily treated, and the prognosis is good. If the abnormal complexion colour is dark and deep, it means that the disease is severe and is located deep in the Interior or in the Yin organs. The treatment is relatively difficult, and the disease cannot be cured within a short time.

Chapter 15 of the 'Simple Questions' says:

If there are changes of the colours in the upper, lower, left and right regions of the face, efforts should be made to understand the location and prognosis of the diseases indicated by the respective colours. If the abnormal colour is light, it implies that the diseases are mild. Such patients can be treated with soups to nourish the body. They will recover in ten days. If the abnormal colour is deep, it indicates that the



Figure 3.1. Superficial colour (red).



Figure 3.2. Deep colour (red).

disease is severe. Such patients should be treated with a herbal decoction. They will recover in 21 days. If the abnormal colour is even deeper, it means that the disease is much more severe. They must be treated with a herbal tincture to regulate the circulation in the channels. They will recover in 100 days. If the colour of the complexion is dark, haggard, vigourless and emaciated, it shows that the Spirit is gone, the disease cannot be treated and such patients will die in 100 days.⁹

SUPERFICIAL OR DEEP COLOUR

- Superficial colour: condition mild, Exterior, Yang
- Deep colour: condition severe, Interior, Yin

b) Distinct or obscure colour

Observation

The differentiation between a 'distinct' and an 'obscure' colour refers to the quality of the complexion colour: a distinct colour is bright and clear and manifests itself readily while an obscure colour is darkish, dull and lifeless as if 'trapped' inside the complexion. It is important to note that the differentiation between the distinct colour and the obscure colour of the complexion applies to any shade of pathological colour and both the distinct and obscure colours are abnormal; for example, a pathological, dull, yellow complexion may be either 'distinct' or 'obscure' (Figs. 3.3 and 3.4).

The chapter 'Outline of Ten Methods for Recognizing Qi' in 'Wang Zhen Zun Jing' says:

The distinct, bright colour looks unfolded and the dark, obscure colour looks gloomy. The distinct colour indicates that the disease is of the Yang type; the obscure colour

indicates that the disease is of the Yin type. If the distinct colour becomes obscure, it means that the disease has changed from the Yang to the Yin type. If the obscure colour becomes distinct, it means that the disease has changed from the Yin to the Yang type.¹⁰

Clinical significance

If an abnormal complexion looks distinct and bright, it indicates that the disease is of the Yang type, the location of the disease is superficial and the Upright Qi is not exhausted yet. If an abnormal complexion colour looks dark and obscure, it indicates that the disease is of the Yin type, the location of the disease is deep in the Interior, the Upright Qi is deficient and the disease is severe.

If in the course of a disease the complexion colour changes from distinct to obscure, it indicates that the disease is progressing from the Yang to the Yin organs which is a poor sign. If it changes from obscure to distinct, it indicates that the disease is progressing from the Yin to the Yang organs which is a good sign.

In treatment, for patients with an abnormal but distinct complexion colour, the emphasis of the treatment should be on eliminating pathogenic factors. For patients with an abnormal but obscure complexion colour, equal emphasis should be put on eliminating pathogenic factors and strengthening the Upright Qi.

DISTINCT OR OBSCURE COLOUR

- Distinct colour: Yang type of disease, superficial, Upright Qi not exhausted
- Obscure colour: Yin type of disease, deep, Upright Qi weakened



Figure 3.3. Distinct colour (red).



Figure 3.4. Obscure colour (red).

c) Scattered or concentrated colour

Observation

When considering abnormal complexion colours, another differentiation is that between 'scattered' and 'concentrated'. The scattered colour is thinly distributed and sparse, while the concentrated colour is densely distributed and aggregated (Figs. 3.5 and 3.6).

Chapter 49 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The observation whether the colour is scattered or concentrated tells us whether the disease is a long way off or imminent'.¹¹

The chapter 'Outline of Ten Methods for Recognizing Qi' in 'Wang Zhen Zun Jing' gives a different interpretation of the clinical significance of the scattered or concentrated colours:

The scattered colour is thinly distributed and 'open'; the concentrated colour is densely distributed and 'closed'. The scattered colour indicates that the disease has had a short duration, and is about to be alleviated. The concentrated

*colour indicates that the disease has had a long duration and will gradually become severe. If the abnormal colour is concentrated at first but changes later to being scattered, it indicates that the disease is about to be alleviated even though it has had a long duration. If the abnormal colour is scattered at first but changes later to being concentrated, it indicates that the disease is becoming severe even though it has had a short duration.*¹²

Clinical significance

When an abnormal complexion colour is scattered, this indicates that the disease is of short duration and mild nature, it will be treated relatively easily and the prognosis is good. When an abnormal complexion colour is concentrated, this indicates that the disease is of long duration and severe, pathogenic factors are strong, the treatment is relatively difficult and the prognosis is less good than in the case of a scattered colour.

SCATTERED OR CONCENTRATED COLOUR

- Scattered colour: mild disease, short duration, pathogenic factors not strong, prognosis good
- Concentrated colour: severe disease, long duration, pathogenic factors strong, prognosis not good



Figure 3.5. Scattered colour (red).



Figure 3.6. Concentrated colour (red).

d) Thin or thick colour

Observation

The differentiation between a thin colour and a thick colour is based on the 'thickness' of the colour. To understand this distinction one could think of paint: the thin colour corresponds to a single skimpy coat of paint while the thick colour corresponds to several heavy coats of paint (Figs. 3.7 and 3.8).

Clinical significance

A thin colour indicates a Deficiency while a thick colour indicates an Excess; that is, the presence of pathogenic factors. If the colour changes from thin to thick, it indicates that the condition is changing from one of Deficiency to one of Excess; if it changes from thick to thin it indicates that the condition is changing from one of Excess to one of Deficiency.

THIN OR THICK COLOUR

- Thin colour: Deficiency
- Thick colour: Fullness

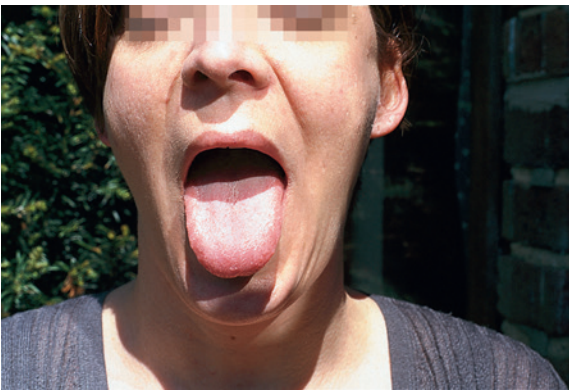


Figure 3.7. Thin colour (yellow).



Figure 3.8. Thick colour (yellow).

e) Lustrous or lustreless colour

Observation

A lustrous complexion is bright, moist, vigorous and shining, while a lustreless complexion is dark, dull, gloomy and 'withered'. It is important to note that, in the context of pathology, an abnormal colour may be lustreless or lustrous. The presence of lustre in the complexion indicates a good prognosis, even if the colour is abnormal. The brightness of the complexion is a manifestation of the Spirit, while the lustre derives from the nourishment of Essence and Blood.

Clinical significance

If an abnormal complexion colour is lustrous, it denotes that the Spirit is not affected, pathogenic factors are not too strong, the condition is mild, the treatment relatively easy and the prognosis good. If an abnormal complexion colour is lustreless, it indicates that the

Spirit has been affected, pathogenic factors are relatively strong, the Upright Qi is very deficient, the condition is severe, the treatment relatively difficult and the prognosis poor.

Chapter 49 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'Observation of the lustre or lack of lustre of the complexion colour allows us to judge whether the prognosis is good or bad'.¹³

If an abnormal colour of complexion acquires lustre, this indicates that the condition is improving, Upright Qi is returning, the Spirit is recovering and the prognosis is good; vice versa, if an abnormal lustrous colour of the complexion loses its lustre, this indicates that the Spirit is affected, the condition is worsening, Upright Qi is weakening and the prognosis is poor.

LUSTROUS OR LUSTRELESS COLOUR

- Lustrous colour: Spirit good, pathogenic factors not strong, condition mild, prognosis good.
- Lustreless colour: Spirit weakened, pathogenic factors strong, condition severe, prognosis not good.

f) Conforming or opposing colour

Observation

The differentiation between a 'conforming' colour and an 'opposing' colour is based on two distinct aspects: the first is whether the complexion colour accords with the prevailing disharmony; the second is whether the complexion colour accords with the prevailing disharmony according to the Five Elements and specifically according to the Generating and Over-acting cycles (Table 3.1).

i. Conforming or opposing colour according to pattern

According to the first aspect, a 'conforming' colour is in accordance with the condition of the patient; for example, the patient has a Heat pattern and the complexion is red. An 'opposing' colour contradicts the patient's prevailing pattern; for example, the patient has a clear Heat pattern but the complexion is pale. There can be several different explanations of a contradiction between the prevailing disharmony and the complexion colour, as follows:

- The complexion colour may contradict the main disharmony simply because the patient suffers from several different patterns and the complexion reflects one of them. For example, it would not be unusual

Table 3.1 Summary of complexion colour types

	Appearance	Significance
Superficial	Seen clearly on the surface of the complexion	Condition mild, Exterior, Yang
Article I. Deep	Article II. It appears to be a level below the surface	Article III. Condition severe, Interior, Yin
Distinct	Bright and clear, manifests itself readily	Yang type of disease, superficial, Upright Qi not exhausted
Obscure	Darkish, dull and lifeless as if 'trapped' inside the complexion	Yin type of disease, deep, Upright Qi weakened
Scattered	Thinly distributed and sparse	Mild disease, short duration, pathogenic factors not strong, prognosis good
Concentrated	Densely distributed and aggregated	Severe disease, long duration, pathogenic factors strong, prognosis not good
With lustre	Bright, moist, vigorous and shining	Spirit is not affected, pathogenic factors are not too strong, the condition is mild, the treatment relatively easy and the prognosis good
Without lustre	Dark, dull, gloomy and 'withered'	Spirit has been affected, pathogenic factors are relatively strong, the Upright Qi is very deficient, the condition is severe, the treatment relatively difficult and the prognosis poor

for a person to suffer from chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency and therefore have a dull, pale-yellowish complexion but also to suffer from Heart-Fire.

- The complexion colour is influenced by seasonal influences: thus, a person may have a reddish complexion in the summer but suffer from chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency.
- The complexion colour strongly reflects the state of the Mind and Spirit and it may occasionally contradict the prevailing pattern. For example, a person may

suffer from Liver-Fire but if this developed from the accumulated stagnant Qi deriving from deep emotional problems such as shock and guilt, the complexion may not be red but pale-bluish or greenish. In such cases, the complexion usually shows the deep, underlying emotional cause of the disharmony.

- In rare cases, there may be a 'false' complexion colour when there is a total separation of Yin and Yang and the patient suffers from 'false Yang' (red face, very cold limbs and slow pulse) or from 'false Yin' (very pale face, feeling of heat, red tongue).

ii. Conforming or opposing colour according to the Five Elements

According to the second aspect, the conforming or opposing complexion colour is also decided on the basis of the Five Elements and one can distinguish four different situations when the complexion does not accord with the prevailing Element pattern. A practical example is the best way of describing these four possible situations:

If a patient suffers from a Liver pattern but the complexion reflects the colour of the Mother Element (i.e. Water), this is called conforming colour; if the complexion reflects the colour of the Child Element (i.e. Fire) this is called the slightly opposing colour (Chinese books refer to it as 'opposition within conformity'); if the complexion reflects the colour of the Element over-acted upon (i.e. Earth) this is called opposing colour (Chinese books refer to it as 'conformity within opposition'); if the complexion reflects the colour of the Element over-acting on that of the prevailing pattern (i.e. Metal) this is called strongly opposing colour (Table 3.2). The last scenario, in which the complexion colour belongs to the Element that over-acts on the Element of the prevailing pattern, is the most serious one. For example, if a patient suffers from a severe Spleen-Qi deficiency (Earth) but the complexion is green (Wood), this is a bad sign and it means that the condition will be more difficult to treat.

The conforming and opposing colours for diseases of the Five Elements are illustrated in Figs. 3.9–3.13.

Clinical significance

The differentiation between a conforming or an opposing colour, whether according to pattern or the Five Elements, helps us to gauge the severity of the disease, the relative strength of pathogenic factors and Upright Qi and therefore the prognosis. If the complexion colour conforms with the disease condition, it indicates that the disease is mild, pathogenic factors are not strong, Upright

Table 3.2 Conforming and opposing complexion colours according to the Five Elements

Diseased element	COMPLEXION				
	Green	Red	Yellow	White	Dark
WOOD		Slightly opposing	Opposing	Strongly opposing	Conforming
FIRE	Conforming		Slightly opposing	Opposing	Strongly opposing
EARTH	Strongly opposing	Conforming		Slightly opposing	Opposing
METAL	Opposing	Strongly opposing	Conforming		Slightly opposing
WATER	Slightly opposing	Opposing	Strongly opposing	Conforming	

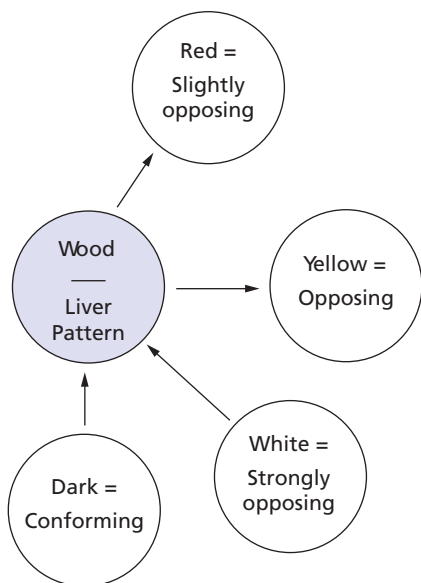


Figure 3.9. Conforming and opposing colours in Liver patterns.

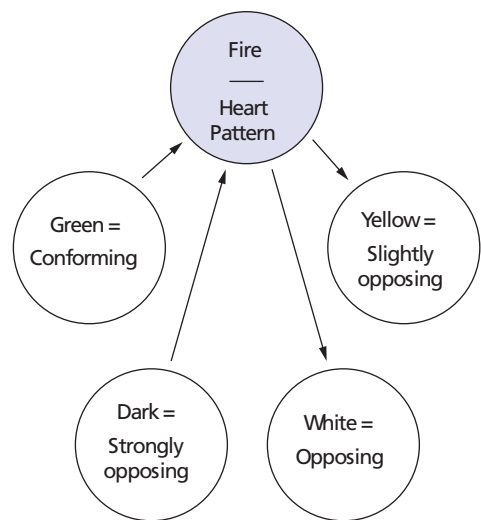


Figure 3.10. Conforming and opposing colours in Heart patterns.

Qi is still relatively intact, the treatment will be relatively easy and the prognosis is good. If the complexion colour opposes the disease condition, it indicates that the disease is severe, pathogenic factors are strong, Upright Qi is weak, the treatment will be relatively difficult and the prognosis is bad.

Of course, the conformity or opposition of the complexion colour according to the Five Elements is only one of the aspects to be considered in colour diagnosis. All other factors should be taken into account and, with regard to complexion in particular, the presence or absence of lustre overrides the others. In other words, if the complexion is dark, dull and without lustre, this indicates a poor prognosis even if the colour is

conforming. Conversely, if the complexion has lustre the prognosis is good even if the colour is opposing.

g) Prognosis according to complexion colour

Observation

Complexion colour is used to determine prognosis in four ways: firstly by determining the presence or absence of lustre; secondly by paying attention to the ‘thickness’ of the colour; thirdly, by analysing the ‘conforming’ or ‘rebellious’ nature of the colour according to its movement between areas of the face; and fourthly, by analysing the complexion colour in its conformity to or

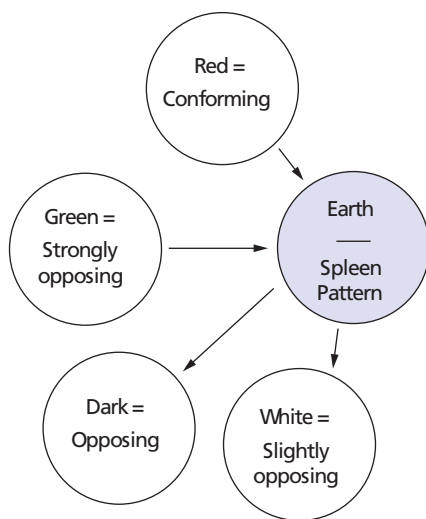


Figure 3.11. Conforming and opposing colours in Spleen patterns.

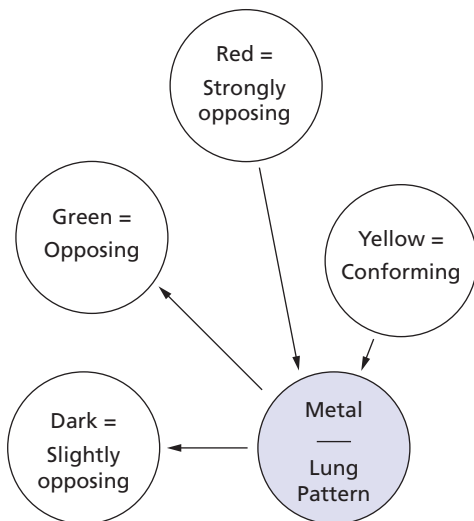


Figure 3.12. Conforming and opposing colours in Lung patterns.

deviation from the seasonal influence. Thus, four aspects will be discussed:

- i. Presence or absence of lustre
- ii. Thick or thin colour
- iii. Conforming or rebellious colour according to area of the face
- iv. Conformity or deviation of colour according to season

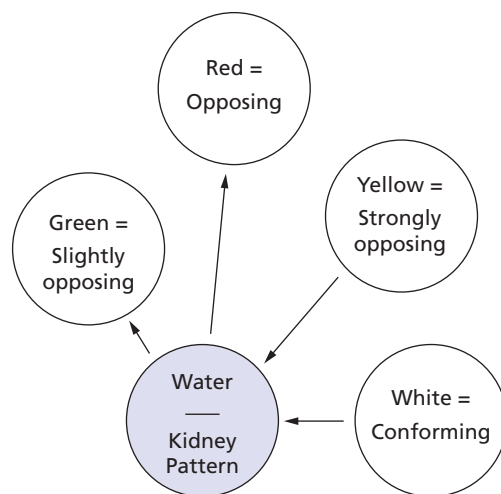


Figure 3.13. Conforming and opposing colours in Kidney patterns.

i. Presence or absence of lustre

If a pathological complexion colour is bright, lustrous and contained, it is a sign of good prognosis; if it is dark, lustreless and fully revealed, it indicates poor prognosis. Shi Pa Nan in 'Origin of Medicine' (1861) says: '*The shen of the complexion consists in lustre and body. Lustre means that the complexion appears clear and bright from the outside; body means that it is moist and with lustre in the inside*'.¹⁴ If a complexion has such attributes, even if the colour is pathological, it indicates that the Mind and Spirit are stable and unaffected and therefore the prognosis is good.

Chapter 10 of the 'Simple Questions' differentiates between the good prognosis and the poor prognosis by observation of the five main pathological colours, comparing them with various objects that were in common daily use in ancient China (some of which will be unfamiliar to Westerners). The colours are as follows:

Pathological colour	Good prognosis	Poor prognosis
Green	feather of a kingfisher	dead grass
Red	rooster comb	stagnant blood
Yellow	abdomen of a crab	bitter orange
White	pig's fat	dead bone
Dark	crow's feathers	coal ash ¹⁵

The same chapter also describes the five main healthy complexion colours, again comparing them with various objects as follows:

Organ	Healthy complexion colour
Liver	thin piece of white silk covering a dark purple one
Heart	thin piece of white silk covering cinnabar
Spleen	thin piece of white silk covering snakegourd (Gua Lou) fruit
Lungs	thin piece of white silk covering a pink one
Kidneys	thin piece of white silk covering a purple one ¹⁶

It is interesting to note that the normal, healthy colours are described as being covered by a thin piece of white silk which means that they should be rather subdued and subtle; it is also interesting that pathological colours are latent and manifest themselves when the 'thin piece of white silk' is removed.

Chapter 17 of the 'Simple Questions' describes the look of pathological colours with or without lustre in a slightly different way: 'A red complexion should look like vermilion covered with white, not like ochre. A white complexion should look like feathers of a goose, not like salt. A blue complexion should look like moistened greyish jade, not like indigo. A yellow complexion should look like realgar covered with gauze, not like loess [the soil in North China along the Yellow River basin]. A black complexion should look like dark varnish, not like greyish charcoal'.¹⁷ Dr Chen Shi Duo in 'Secret Records of the Stone Room' (1687) goes as far as saying: 'If the complexion is dark but with shen, the person will live even if the disease is serious. If the complexion is bright but without shen, the person will die even if there is no disease'.¹⁸

If the complexion colour is bright, lustrous and contained, it indicates that, even though there is a pathological state, the internal organs are not weakened, pathogenic factors are not too strong, Stomach-Qi is still relatively intact, the disease is mild and the prognosis is good. If the complexion colour is dark, lustreless and fully revealed, it shows that the internal organs are weakened, pathogenic factors are strong, Stomach-Qi is exhausted, the disease is severe and the prognosis is poor.

ii. Thin or thick colour

The 'thickness' of the facial complexion colour is directly related to the intensity of the pathological condition: a thin and superficial colour indicates either an Exterior disease or a light pathogenic factor, while a thick and

deep colour indicates an Interior disease and a strong pathogenic factor. Therefore a change from a thick to a thin facial colour indicates that the pathogenic factors are getting weaker and the disease is retreating; by contrast, a change from a thin to a thick facial colour indicates that the pathogenic factors are getting stronger and the disease is advancing.

iii. Conforming or rebellious colour according to area of the face

The conformity or rebellious nature of a colour must also be related to any movement of the colour from one area of the face to another.

A movement of a pathological facial colour from the top to the bottom part of the face indicates an improvement of the condition and is called 'conforming' movement; by contrast, a movement of a pathological colour from the bottom to the top part of the face indicates a worsening of the condition and is called 'rebellious' movement.

The 'Simple Questions' in Chapter 15 relates the conforming or rebellious movement of a facial colour (and therefore the prognosis) also to the left or right side of the face making a distinction according to sex: 'In women, [a colour] on the right side indicates a rebellious [colour], while on the left side it is conforming. In men, [a colour] on the left side indicates a rebellious [colour], while on the right side it is conforming'.¹⁹ This passage correlates the prognosis to the location of a pathological colour on the right or left side of the face in men and women: for example, in a woman, an excessively red colour is always pathological whether it is on the right or left but it is worse if it is on the right cheek, vice versa applies with a man.

iv. Conformity or deviation of colour according to season

The complexion colour should be assessed carefully in the light of seasonal influences: if the influence of climatic factors of the seasons exceeds that of the pathology of the five Yin organs, it is a sign of a good prognosis; if the influence of the pathology of the five Yin organs exceeds that of the climatic factors of the seasons (the 'Guest Qi'), it is a sign of a bad prognosis.

The chapter 'Keys to the Four Diagnostic Methods' in the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (Yi Zong Jin Jian) says:

The Qi of the five Yin organs manifests with the five different [physiological] colours in accordance with the five different types of body shapes. Such colours will never change and are called Dominant Colours. The colours influenced by

the climatic factors of the four seasons will change accordingly and are not the same all the time: they are called the Guest Colours. The climate in Spring corresponds to the Liver, and the complexion colour is relatively green. The climate in Summer corresponds to the Heart, and the complexion colour is relatively red. The climate in Autumn corresponds to the Lungs, and the complexion colour is relatively white. The climate in Winter corresponds to the Kidneys, and the complexion colour is relatively dark. The climate in Late Summer corresponds to the Spleen, and the complexion colour is relatively yellow. These colours are seen when the climatic changes in the seasons are normal. The Dominant Colours are a [physiological] manifestation of the five Yin organs, while the Guest Colours are produced by the climatic changes of the seasons. Therefore, [when observing] the complexion colour, if the influence of the climatic factors of the seasons exceeds that of the five Yin organs, it indicates a good prognosis. That is why it is said that the Guest colour replacing the Dominant colours is a sign of good prognosis. If the influence of the five Yin organs exceeds that of the climatic factors of the seasons, it is a sign of poor prognosis. That is why it is said that the Dominant Colours overtaking the Guest Colours is a sign of poor prognosis. The so-called replacing of the colours is found in the following situations: the complexion colour should be green [in Spring] but is white instead; the complexion colour should be red [in Summer] but is black instead; the complexion colour should be white [in Autumn] but is red instead; the complexion colour should be black [in Winter] but is yellow instead; and the complexion colour should be yellow [in Late Summer] but is green instead.²⁰

Reading the above quotation, it should be noted that a poor prognosis is indicated when the dominant colour becomes pathological, when it manifests in the 'wrong' season and, specifically, when it belongs to the Element that over-acts, along the Over-acting cycle, on the Element of that particular season. For example, having a yellow complexion in Springtime (instead of greenish) indicates a poor prognosis but the prognosis would be even worse if the complexion were white (because Metal over-acts on Wood).

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGNOSIS ACCORDING TO COMPLEXION

1. Presence or absence of lustre
2. Thin or thick colour
3. Conformity or rebelliousness of colour according to face area
4. Conformity or deviation of colour according to season

Su Wen Chapter 10 (complexion)

Complexion indicating poor prognosis:

- Blue as dead grass
- Yellow like the seeds of trifoliate orange
- Black like bituminous coal ash
- Red like stagnant blood
- White as dry bones

Complexion indicating good prognosis:

- Blue like the feathers of a kingfisher
- Red like a rooster's comb
- Yellow like the abdomen of a crab
- White like lard
- Black like the feathers of a crow

Zang complexions indicating good prognosis:

- If the Heart is healthy the complexion is like cinabar wrapped in thin white silk; if the Lungs are healthy the complexion is like pink silk wrapped in thin white silk; if the Liver is healthy the complexion is like azure silk wrapped in thin white silk; if the Spleen is healthy the complexion is like the seeds of *Trichosanthes* wrapped in thin white silk; if the Kidneys are healthy the complexion is like purplish silk wrapped in thin white silk.

h) Changes in complexion colour during a disease

Observation

When observing complexion colour, in addition to the above-mentioned aspects – whether the abnormal colour is superficial or deep, distinct or obscure, lustrous or lustreless, scattered or concentrated, conforming or opposing – attention should be paid also to observing any changes in the complexion in the course of a chronic disease.

Chapter 49 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'If the complexion colour looks contained and slightly bright, it indicates that the disease is mild. If the complexion colour is dark and lustreless, it means that the disease is severe. If the abnormal colour moves upwards [in the face], it is a sign of aggravation of the disease. If the abnormal colour moves downwards [in the face], like black clouds dissipating, it is a sign of the gradual alleviation of the disease'.²¹

Clinical significance

The changes occurring in the complexion colour in the course of a disease reflect the changes in the relative strength of pathogenic factors and Upright Qi. Changes

in the complexion colour indicating a worsening of the condition are as follows: from conforming to opposing, from thin to thick, from superficial to deep, from distinct to obscure, from scattered to concentrated, and from lustrous to lustreless.

All these indicate that the disease is moving from the Exterior to the Interior, pathogenic factors are growing stronger, Upright Qi is getting weaker, the disease is becoming more severe and the treatment given is not effective. Changes in the complexion colour indicating an improvement in the condition are as follows: from opposing to conforming, from thick to thin, from deep to superficial, from obscure to distinct, from concentrated to scattered, and from lustreless to lustrous. All these signs indicate that the disease is moving from the Interior to the Exterior, pathogenic factors are subsiding, the Upright Qi is becoming stronger, the disease is getting better and the treatment received is effective.

Su Wen [Chapter 15](#) (face colour, change in course of illness and prognosis):

Diseases with a superficial complexion should be treated with Tang Ye [congee made of five grains] and can be cured in 10 days. Diseases with a deep complexion should be treated with drugs and can be cured in 21 days. Diseases with a very deep complexion should be treated with Lao Jiu [thick wine made from five grains] and can be cured in 100 days. Disease with a haggard and bony face will lead to death in 100 days.

The changes of complexion on upper, lower, left and right areas of the face indicate the changes in the course of a disease. The upper is unfavourable [Ni] and the lower is favourable [Cong]. In women, the right side is unfavourable and the left is favourable. In men, the left is unfavourable and the right is favourable.

Comment: In this passage, 'superficial complexion' and 'deep complexion' are equivalent to the 'superficial' or 'deep' colour of the complexion described in this chapter. A colour is defined as 'superficial' when it is seen clearly on the surface of the complexion, while it is defined as 'deep' when it appears to be a level below the surface. This chapter clearly says that a superficial colour of the complexion indicates a better prognosis than a deep colour as the former can be treated with food therapy while the latter with herbal medicinals.

The second part of the quote requires an explanation. Firstly, when Su Wen says 'the upper is unfavourable' it means a *movement* of the colour from the lower to the

upper part; and when it says 'the lower is favourable' it means a *movement* of the colour from the upper to the lower part. Similarly when the quote says 'the right is Ni' it means a *movement* of the colour from left to right, likewise for 'left is Ni'. Secondly, it should be remembered that men pertain to Yang and the left side is Yang; women pertain to Yin and the right side is Yin. Thus, in women a movement of the colour from left to right is unfavourable (because the right is 'their' side) while a movement of the colour from right to left is favourable. Vice versa for men.

i) Complexion colours and emotions

Specific signs in the complexion may indicate various emotions.

Anger usually manifests with a greenish tinge on the cheeks or under the eyes. If there is such a tinge on the forehead, it means that Liver-Qi has invaded the Stomach; if on the tip of the nose, that Liver-Qi has invaded the Spleen. Being prone to anger may also be manifested by eyebrows that meet in the centre. In some cases, if the anger is bottled up inside as resentment leading to long-standing depression, the complexion may be pale. This is due to the depressing effect of stagnant Liver-Qi on Spleen- or Lung-Qi. In such cases, the Wiry quality of the pulse will betray the existence of anger rather than sadness or grief (indicated by the pale complexion) as a cause of disease.

Excess joy may manifest with a red colour on the cheekbones.

Worry causes a greyish complexion and a skin without lustre because it knots Lung-Qi and affects the Corporeal Soul, which manifests on the skin.

Pensiveness may manifest with a sallow complexion because it depletes Spleen-Qi.

Fear shows with a bright-white complexion on the cheeks and forehead. If chronic fear causes deficiency of Kidney-Yin and the rising of Empty-Heat of the Heart, there will be a malar flush, with the underlying colour being bright-white.

Shock also causes a bright-white complexion. Shock early in childhood may manifest with a bluish tinge on the forehead. Such a bluish tinge there or around the mouth indicates a pre-natal shock (while in the uterus).

Hatred often shows with a greenish complexion on the cheeks.

Craving shows with a reddish colour on the cheeks.

Guilt shows with a dark-ruddy complexion.

EMOTIONS AND COMPLEXION COLOURS

- Anger: greenish on cheeks or under eyes
- Excess joy: red on cheekbones
- Worry: greyish without lustre
- Pensiveness: sallow-yellow
- Fear: bright-white on cheeks and forehead
- Shock: bright-white or bluish
- Hatred: dull greenish without lustre
- Craving: reddish on cheeks

Ling Shu Chapter 4 (correspondence of complexion and pulse): Bluish complexion is accompanied by a wiry pulse; reddish complexion is accompanied by a hook pulse; yellow complexion is accompanied by an intermittent pulse; whitish complexion is accompanied by a pulse like hair [soft]; a blackish complexion is accompanied by a pulse like stone [hard].

3. COMPLEXION COLOURS

The complexion colours are:

- Normal
- White
- Yellow
- Red
- Bluish/greenish
- Dark
- Purple

a) Normal complexion colour

Observation

As 'normality' obviously varies from race to race, it is impossible to define a universal normal colour. We can, however, identify and define four essential characteristics of a normal complexion:

- lustre
- a subtle, slightly reddish hue
- 'contained', 'veiled' colour
- moisture

The presence of lustre is an essential part of a normal complexion. Such a complexion is slightly shiny, vibrant in colour, lively, relatively bright and glowing. The presence of lustre in the complexion indicates that the Upright Qi is intact (even though there may be a pathology) and that the Mind and Spirit are healthy. The lustre of the complexion is equivalent to the spirit of the pulse (one of the attributes of the normal pulse) or of the eyes: they all indicate a good state of the Mind and Spirit.

The normal complexion should have a subtle, slightly reddish hue because the facial colour as a whole reflects the state of the Heart and a reddish hue indicates a good supply of Heart-Blood (and by implication, a good state of the Mind).

The colour of the facial complexion should be 'contained' as if there was a very thin, white silk veil over it. The book 'Wang Zhen Zun Jing' describes the normal complexion colour as being bright and lustrous and says: *'The complexion is bright because of the embodiment of the Spirit. It is lustrous because of the nourishment of the Essence and Blood'*.²²

The normal complexion should be moist and look firm (because of the fluids underneath): a dry complexion is always a poor prognostic sign. The moisture of the complexion is equivalent to the Stomach-Qi of the pulse (one of the attributes of the normal pulse): they therefore both indicate that the patient's Stomach-Qi is intact (even though there may be pathogenic factors).

Apart from these four basic aspects of a normal complexion, the actual colour of course varies enormously according to race and even within the same racial group. The normal complexion colour for Caucasian people is a mixed white and slightly reddish colour which is lustrous, bright and contained. Within the Caucasian race, however, there can be considerable variations in normal complexion: for example, the normal complexion of a Norwegian person will be quite different from that of a Spaniard as the Mediterranean complexion is naturally slightly darker and of a more earthy colour than that of the Northern European. The complexion of Chinese people is described in Chinese books as a mixed red and yellow colour shown slightly which is bright, lustrous and reserved.

The same wide variations may be observed in Asian, African and African-American people. For example, the complexion of people in North India is much lighter than that of Indians from the South.

Apart from racial differences, there can be wide variations in normal complexion in people of the same race due to other factors such as the influence of pre-natal constitution, the profession, the area people come from and their working or living environment. However, complexion colour changes caused by the above-mentioned factors are not regarded as abnormal. For example, the normal complexion of a farmer will be rosier and redder than that of an office worker (Fig. 3.14).

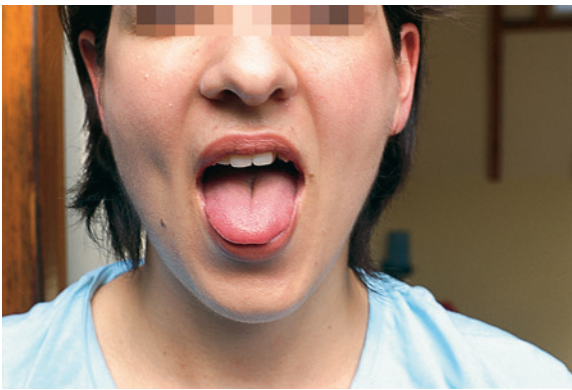


Figure 3.14. Normal complexion colour.

Clinical significance

A bright, lustrous, white-reddish and 'contained' complexion colour in Caucasian people indicates strong Stomach-Qi, normal internal organs, ample Blood and good Spirit. This is regarded as a normal complexion colour. If such a complexion colour is observed in the process of a disease, it means that the duration of the disease is short, the pathogenic factors are weak, the Upright Qi is still strong, the treatment will be easy and the prognosis is good.

Chapter 17 of the 'Simple Questions' says:

In the course of a disease, if the pulse is small and the complexion colour is normal, it is a disease with a short duration. If the pulse is normal but the complexion colour is abnormal, it is a disease with a long duration. If both the pulse and the complexion colour are abnormal, it is a disease with a long duration. If both the pulse and the complexion colour are normal, it is a disease with a short duration'.²³

This highlights the connection between complexion colour and the duration of a disease.

ATTRIBUTES OF NORMAL COMPLEXION

1. Lustre: Spirit strong
2. Subtle reddish hue: Heart-Blood abundant
3. 'Contained', 'veiled' colour: no pathogenic factors
4. Moisture: good state of fluids

b) White complexion colour

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, **Chapter 56**

There are several shades of white complexion:

- Bright-white
- Dull-white



Figure 3.15. Bright-white complexion colour.

- Pale-white
- Sallow-white
- Bluish-white

Bright-white

Observation

The bright-white complexion is of a brilliant and obvious white colour (**Fig. 3.15**).

Clinical significance

The bright-white complexion usually indicates Yang deficiency which may affect especially the Spleen, Stomach, Lungs, Heart and Kidneys.

Dull-white

Observation

The dull-white complexion has no lustre and is somewhat greyish (**Fig. 3.16**).

Clinical significance

The dull-white complexion also indicates Yang deficiency but of a more severe degree than that indicated by the bright-white complexion. A dull-white complexion that looks like dry bones indicates Lung-Yang deficiency.

Pale-white

Observation

The pale-white complexion is also somewhat bright like the bright-white complexion but to a lesser degree (**Fig. 3.17**).

Clinical significance

The pale-white complexion indicates Qi deficiency.

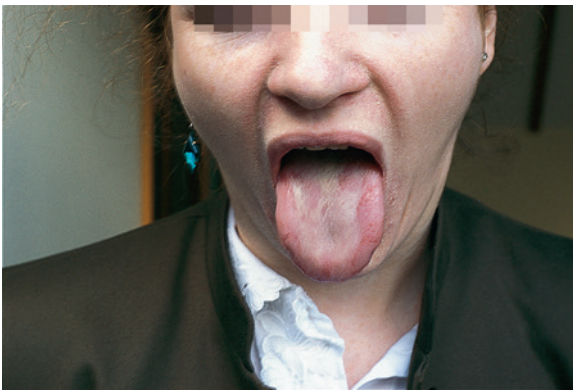


Figure 3.16. Dull-white complexion colour.



Figure 3.18. Sallow-white complexion colour.



Figure 3.17. Pale-white complexion colour.



Figure 3.19. Sallow-white complexion colour.

Sallow-white

Observation

The sallow-white complexion is dull, without lustre and yellowish (Figs. 3.18 and 3.19).

Clinical significance

The sallow-white complexion indicates Blood deficiency. A further differentiation can be made according to subtle variations of the sallow-white colour. For example, a sallow-white complexion which is also very slightly bluish indicates severe Blood deficiency; a sallow-white complexion which is also slightly yellow indicates Qi deficiency not holding Blood with resulting bleeding; a sallow-white tip of the nose indicates Blood deficiency deriving from Spleen deficiency; a sallow-white complexion without lustre indicates Qi and Blood deficiency with Dryness; a sallow-white and slightly yellow complexion in women after childbirth indicates exhaustion of Blood.

Bluish-white

Observation

The bluish-white complexion is bright-white with a subtle bluish hue.

Clinical significance

The bluish-white complexion indicates Cold which derives from Yang deficiency. The bright-white complexion described above may also indicate Cold but the emphasis is on Yang deficiency, while with the bluish-white complexion the emphasis is on Cold.

WHITE COMPLEXION COLOUR

- Bright-white: Yang deficiency (Spleen, Stomach, Lungs, Heart, Kidneys)
- Dull-white: severe Yang deficiency
- Pale-white: Qi deficiency
- Sallow-white: Blood deficiency
- Bluish-white: Cold

c) Yellow complexion colour

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapters 56 and 68

There are several types of yellow complexion:

- Dull-yellow
- Greyish-yellow
- Bluish-yellow
- Floating, reddish-yellow
- Floating yellow
- Dry-yellow
- Ash-like yellow
- Rich-yellow
- Jaundice-yellow

Dull-yellow

Observation

The dull yellow complexion is relatively pale-yellow, wan, sallow and without lustre (Fig. 3.20).

Clinical significance

The dull yellow complexion always indicates a deficient, chronic condition and usually a deficiency of Blood. The dull yellow complexion may also indicate a chronic deficiency of Spleen-Qi.

Greyish-yellow

Observation

The greyish-yellow complexion is dull, ashen and without lustre (Fig. 3.21).

Clinical significance

The greyish-yellow complexion is frequently seen in disharmonies of the Spleen and Liver characterized by Spleen-Qi deficiency and stagnation of Liver-Qi and/or

Liver-Blood. This condition is frequently caused by deep, emotional problems and symptoms may include severe abdominal distension, depression, irritability and poor digestion.

Bluish-yellow

Observation

A bluish-yellow complexion is primarily dark yellow with a slight bluish tinge; it is usually seen only in the elderly.

Clinical significance

A bluish-yellow complexion indicates Blood stasis with Damp-Heat.

Floating, reddish-yellow

Observation

A floating, reddish-yellow complexion is bright-yellow with a slight red tinge and it gives the appearance of being on the surface of the skin.

Clinical significance

A floating, reddish-yellow complexion indicates an invasion of Wind-Heat.

Floating yellow

Observation

The floating yellow complexion is bright-yellow and gives the impression of being on the surface of the skin (Fig. 3.22).

Clinical significance

A floating yellow complexion indicates an invasion of external Wind-Dampness.



Figure 3.20. Dull-yellow complexion colour.



Figure 3.21. Greyish-yellow complexion.

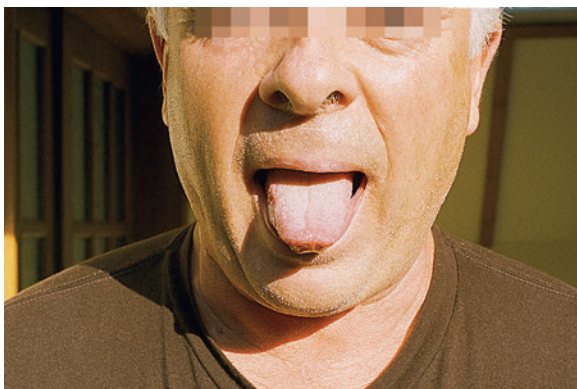


Figure 3.22. Floating yellow complexion colour.



Figure 3.24. Ash-like yellow complexion colour.



Figure 3.23. Dry-yellow complexion colour.



Figure 3.25. Rich-yellow complexion colour.

Dry-yellow

Observation

The dry-yellow complexion is dull and without lustre and the skin is dry, withered and without elasticity (Fig. 3.23).

Clinical significance

The dry-yellow complexion always indicates a disharmony of the Stomach and Spleen, usually due to Heat which may be Full or Empty. A thin, dry, yellow colour indicates Stomach Empty Heat.

Ash-like yellow

Observation

The ash-like yellow complexion is dull, darkish and 'smoky'. It is darker than the greyish-yellow complexion (Fig. 3.24).

Clinical significance

The ash-like yellow complexion always indicates Dampness, often with Heat. It may indicate external Dampness, in which case the patient often suffers from body aches, or internal Dampness, in which case the complexion is slightly dryer and there are no body aches. The ash-like yellow complexion is also seen when Dampness is associated with Qi stagnation.

Rich-yellow

Observation

The rich-yellow complexion is relatively bright and the colour is thick as described above (Fig. 3.25).

Clinical significance

A rich-yellow complexion indicates Qi and Blood deficiency with Dampness.

Bright-yellow (jaundice)

Observation

Patients with jaundice have yellow conjunctiva and a yellow complexion colour which may be either bright yellow, orangey-yellow or dark yellow, as if it is smoked; yellow scanty urine, general weakness, listlessness, and a greasy tongue coating.

Chapter 18 of the 'Simple Questions' says: 'Symptoms such as deep yellow urine and lethargy indicate jaundice... yellow conjunctiva indicates jaundice'.²⁴ Chapter 74 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'If the face is slightly yellow, the teeth filthy yellow, the nails yellow, this indicates jaundice. (If there are also symptoms and signs such as lethargy, deep yellow urine, poor appetite and a Small-Choppy pulse, it then indicates that it is the disease of the Spleen.)'²⁵

Clinical significance

The aetiology of jaundice, manifesting with yellow conjunctiva and a yellow complexion colour, is often related to poor diet and invasion by pathogenic factors such as Damp, Heat and Toxic Heat. It is often located in the Liver, Gall-Bladder, Spleen and Stomach. The nature of the disease is often one of either Damp-Heat, Cold-Damp, Toxic Heat, or Qi and Blood deficiency. Signs and symptoms such as a bright yellow colour like an orange (called 'Yang yellow'), a Red tongue with a thick coating, yellow urine and abdominal distension indicate that the disease is caused by the accumulation of Damp-Heat in the Liver, Gall-Bladder, Spleen and Stomach. Signs and symptoms such as a dark-yellow, smoky colour (called 'Yin yellow') and a light Red tongue body with a thick-white coating indicate that the disease is caused by Cold-Damp being retained in the Liver, Gall-Bladder, Spleen and Stomach.

YELLOW COMPLEXION

- Dull yellow: Spleen-Qi deficiency, Blood deficiency
- Greyish-yellow: Spleen-Qi deficiency with stagnation of Liver-Qi or Liver-Blood
- Dry yellow: Full or Empty Heat in Stomach and Spleen
- Ash-like yellow: Dampness
- Rich yellow: Qi and Blood deficiency with Dampness
- Bright yellow: Jaundice

d) Red complexion colour

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 56

A red complexion always indicates Heat which may be Full or Empty: it indicates Empty Heat particularly when

only the cheeks are red. Redness of the complexion also indicates Empty Heat when it is somewhat 'thin' or 'superficial' as defined above. The clinical significance of the red complexion depends also on the location of the redness.

There are three main types of red complexion:

- Red cheeks
- Red cheek-bones
- Floating red

Red cheeks

Observation

In this case, the facial complexion is too red and the redness is located all over the cheeks; in some cases one cheek may be redder than the other and usually the right cheek reflects the condition of the Lungs while the left one reflects the condition of the Liver (Figs. 3.26 and 3.27).

Clinical significance

A red facial complexion usually indicates Full Heat, which may pertain to various organs, especially the Heart, Lungs, Liver or Stomach. In cases of Full Heat, the whole cheeks are of a full red colour. In some cases, a red complexion may be seen in Empty Heat, in which case the red colour looks 'thinner' and it may come and go.

Red cheek-bones

Observation

In this case, only the cheek-bones are red and the colour is usually 'thinner' than that of Full Heat; the redness of the cheek-bones may come and go and often

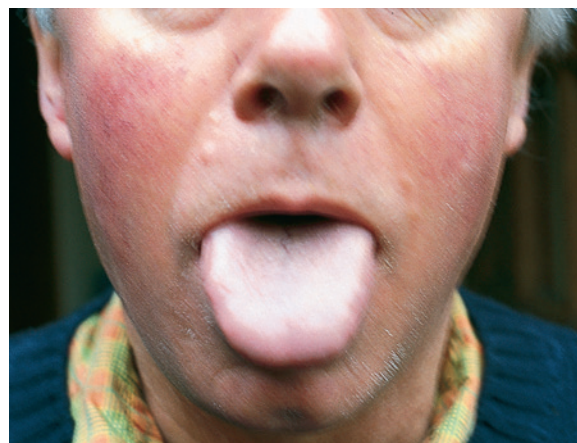


Figure 3.26. Red cheeks.



Figure 3.27. Red cheeks.



Figure 3.28. Red cheek-bones.

it appears only in the afternoon or evening (Figs. 3.28 and 3.29).

Clinical significance

Red cheek-bones always indicate Empty Heat which may affect various organs and especially the Lungs, Heart, Stomach and Kidneys. The clinical significance may be further differentiated according to the type of redness and to the time of day when it appears.

A relatively thin red colour that looks like make-up and appears in the afternoon indicates Blood deficiency; if both cheek-bones are deep red it indicates Empty Heat; if both cheek-bones are fresh red like threads, it indicates Yin deficiency; if both cheek bones are pale red, it indicates 'steaming from the bones' due to chronic Yin deficiency.

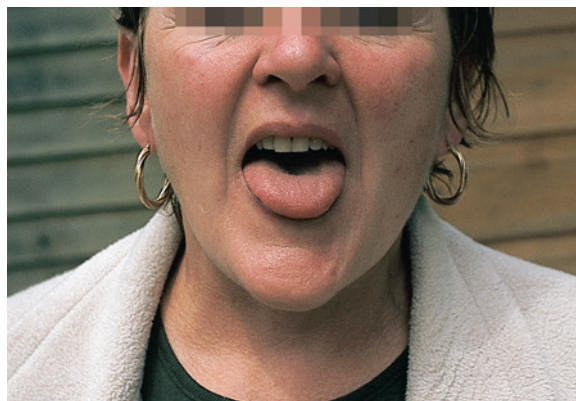


Figure 3.29. Red cheek-bones.



Figure 3.30. Floating-red complexion colour.



Note: Do not assume that red cheek-bones always indicate Yin deficiency; they may also indicate Blood deficiency especially if obvious in the afternoon (common in women).

Floating red

Observation

The floating red colour is a 'thin', floating, pale red that looks like rouge and may move from place to place (Fig. 3.30).

Clinical significance

The floating red colour generally indicates Empty Heat. It is seen also in the pattern characterized by False Heat and True Cold which means that the patient suffers from severe internal Cold and the separation of Yin and Yang which makes Yang 'float' to the top giving the false appearance of Heat. In fact, apart from the redness of the face, all the other signs and symptoms

point to internal Cold (cold limbs, desire to curl up, weak breathing, Pale and Short tongue and Slow pulse). However, this situation is rather rare.

Figures 3.31 to 3.36 illustrate thin/thick, superficial/deep and distinct/obscure red complexion colours.

RED COMPLEXION

- Red cheeks: Full Heat (Heart, Lungs, Liver, Stomach)
- Red cheek-bones: Empty Heat (Lungs, Heart, Stomach, Kidneys) or Blood deficiency
- Floating red: Empty Heat or False Heat–True Cold

e) Bluish/greenish complexion colour

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 56

‘Bluish/greenish’ is a translation of the Chinese word *qing*, which can mean both blue and green. In the context of the Five Elements, it is the colour associated with

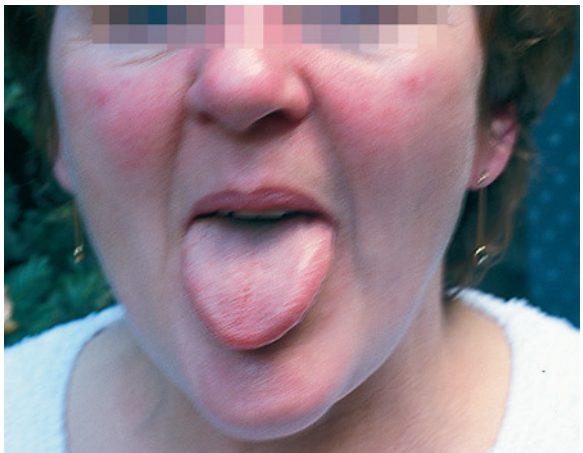


Figure 3.33. Superficial-red complexion colour.



Figure 3.31. Thin-red complexion colour.

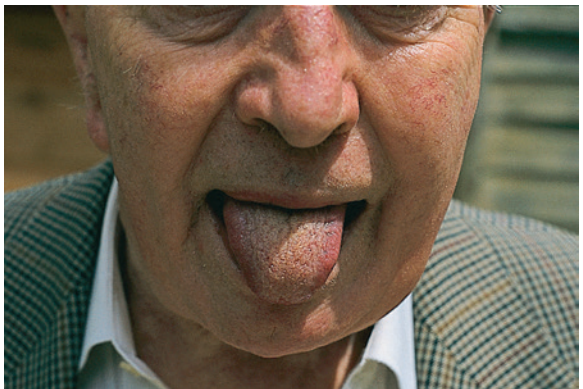


Figure 3.34. Deep-red complexion colour.



Figure 3.32. Thick-red complexion colour.



Figure 3.35. Distinct-red complexion colour.

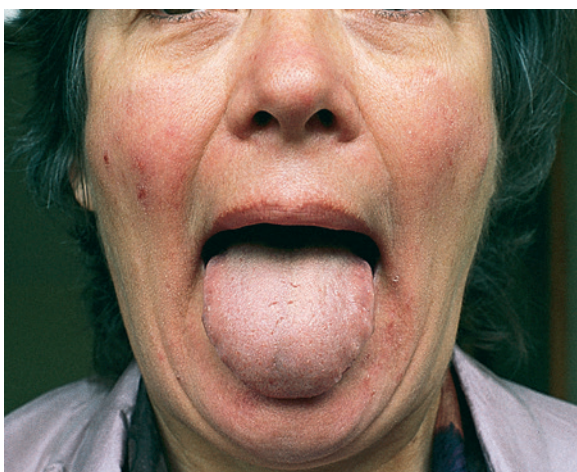


Figure 3.36. Obscure-red complexion colour.



Figure 3.37. Bluish/greenish complexion colour.

Wood and it therefore makes more sense to translate it as green. In the context of facial diagnosis, *qing* can mean either bluish or greenish: for example, the *qing* colour may indicate a Liver pattern in which case it would be greenish, or interior Cold in which case it would be bluish (Fig. 3.37).

There are various types of bluish/greenish colour:

- Pale-greenish under the eyes
- Dark-bluish under the eyes
- White-bluish
- Dull-bluish
- Bluish
- Greenish

Pale-greenish under the eyes

Observation

A pale-greenish colour under the eyes is usually thin and rather bright.

Clinical significance

A pale-greenish colour under the eyes generally indicates Liver-Qi stagnation.

Dark-bluish under the eyes

Observation

A dark-bluish colour under the eyes usually lacks lustre and is dull.

Clinical significance

A dark-bluish colour under the eyes indicates Cold in the Liver channel.

White-bluish

Observation

The white-bluish complexion is bright.

Clinical significance

The white-bluish complexion generally indicates internal Cold or chronic pain.

Dull-bluish

Observation

The dull-bluish complexion is ash-like and without lustre.

Clinical significance

The dull-bluish complexion indicates severe Heart-Yang deficiency with Blood stasis and/or chronic pain. The duller and darker this complexion, the more severe is the condition.

Bluish

Observation

The bluish complexion is bright blue and it is usually confined to the lower part of the forehead or the space between the eyebrows in children.

Clinical significance

A bright bluish complexion in the space between the eyebrows in children indicates Liver-Wind and it is often seen in convulsions. A bluish complexion in pregnant women indicates Blood stasis and Yang deficiency and it is always a poor sign.

Greenish

Observation

The greenish complexion is dull green, somewhat greyish and without lustre.

Clinical significance

The greenish complexion always indicates a Liver pattern, which may be Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Blood stasis, Cold in the Liver channel or Liver-Wind.

A green complexion with a red tinge is seen in the Lesser-Yang syndrome. A green complexion with red eyes indicates Liver-Fire. Yellowish-green cheeks indicate Phlegm with Liver-Yang rising often causing headaches.

A green nose indicates stagnation of Qi often causing abdominal pain. A dark, reddish-green complexion indicates stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat. A pale-green colour under the eyes indicates Liver-Blood deficiency. A grass-green indicates collapse of Liver-Qi.

BLUISH/GREENISH COLOUR

- Pale-greenish under the eyes: Liver-Qi stagnation
- Dark-bluish under the eyes: Cold in the Liver channel
- White-bluish: Cold or chronic pain
- Dull-bluish: severe Heart-Yang deficiency with Blood stasis, chronic pain
- Bluish (in children): Liver-Wind
- Greenish: Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Blood stasis, Cold in the Liver channel, Liver-Wind
- Green with a red tinge: Lesser-Yang syndrome
- Green with red eyes: Liver-Fire
- Yellowish-green cheeks: Phlegm with Liver-Yang rising
- Green nose: stagnation of Qi with abdominal pain
- Dark-reddish green: stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat
- Pale-green under the eyes: Liver-Blood deficiency
- Grass-green: collapse of Liver-Qi

f) Dark complexion colour

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 56](#)

There are several types of dark complexion:

- Dark and dry
- Dull-dark
- Faint-dark
- Very dark

Dark and dry

Observation

The dark and dry complexion is blackish, the skin is dry and withered and the ear-lobes are dry.

Clinical significance

The dark and dry complexion indicates severe Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Dull-dark

Observation

The dark and dull complexion is blackish but faint and dim and the eye sockets are dark.

Clinical significance

The dark and dull complexion indicates severe Kidney-Yang deficiency with Empty Cold. A dark colour around the eye sockets indicates Kidney deficiency with Phlegm-Fluids or Cold-Dampness in the Lower Burner. Dull-dark like soot indicates the collapse of Kidney-Qi.

Faint-dark

Observation

The faint-dark complexion is slightly blackish with a light hue and with a blackish colour around the eye sockets; the face might be swollen.

Clinical significance

The faint-dark complexion indicates severe Damp-Cold or Phlegm-Fluids.

Very dark

Observation

The very dark complexion is almost black, dull and without lustre.

Clinical significance

The very dark complexion indicates severe Blood stasis.

DARK COLOUR

- Dark and dry: Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Dull-dark: Kidney-Yang deficiency with internal Cold
- Dark around the eye sockets: Kidney deficiency with Phlegm-Fluids or Cold-Dampness in the Lower Burner
- Dull-dark like soot: collapse of Kidney-Qi
- Faint-dark: Damp-Cold or Phlegm-Fluids
- Very dark: Blood stasis

g) Purple complexion colour

There are two types of purple complexion colour:

- Reddish-purple
- Bluish-purple

Reddish-purple

Observation

The reddish-purple complexion approximates to the colour of a beetroot and is very similar to the colour of a reddish-purple tongue.

Clinical significance

The reddish-purple complexion indicates severe Blood stasis.

Bluish-purple

Observation

The bluish-purple complexion approximates to the colour of a blueberry but with a lighter hue and is very similar to the colour of the bluish-purple tongue.

Clinical significance

The bluish-purple complexion indicates severe internal Cold leading to Blood stasis. The bluish-purple complexion is also seen in cases of poisoning from food, drugs or toxic herbs.

PURPLE COLOUR

- Reddish-purple: Blood stasis
- Bluish-purple: internal Cold leading to Blood stasis, or poisoning



CHAPTER 3 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The state of the complexion indicates the health of the internal organs, Yin, Yang, Qi, Blood, the Mind and the Spirit.
- Assessment of the complexion, along with the pulse and eyes, indicates the duration of any pathology.
- Consideration should be given to race, Elemental types and environment when examining the complexion.
- Different aspects of complexion colour should be observed.

END NOTES

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Observation of Body Movements

4

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Head

Tremor of the head

Rigidity of the neck

Face

Deviation of eyes and mouth

Facial paralysis (Bell's palsy)

Facial tic

Limbs and body

Paralysis

Tremor or spasticity of the limbs

Twitching of the muscles

Opisthotonos

Contraction of the limbs

Hemiplegia

Tremor of the hands

Tremor of the feet

Contraction of the fingers

The discussion of 'body movements' includes both involuntary body movements and their opposite (i.e. rigidity or paralysis). This discussion will be articulated in the following sections:

1. HEAD
 - a) Tremor of the Head
 - b) Rigidity of the Neck
2. FACE
 - a) Deviation of Eye and Mouth
 - b) Facial Paralysis (Bell's Palsy)
 - c) Facial Tic
3. LIMBS AND BODY
 - a) Paralysis
 - b) Tremor or Spasticity of the Limbs
 - c) Twitching of the Muscles
 - d) Opisthotonos
 - e) Contraction of the Limbs
 - f) Hemiplegia
 - g) Tremor of the Hands
 - h) Tremor of the Feet
 - i) Contraction of the Fingers

1. HEAD

The signs discussed are:

- a) Tremor of the head
- b) Rigidity of the neck

a) Tremor of the head

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Observation

Tremor of the head consists of shaking of the head, with the head usually moving back and forth. The tremor ranges from the very slight with small amplitude to the very pronounced with large amplitude.

Clinical significance

A tremor of the head always indicates internal Wind which itself stems from the Liver. Liver-Wind may be of the Full or Empty type: the Full type develops from Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire while the Empty type develops from Liver- and Kidney-Yin or Liver-Blood deficiency. The tremor of the head is pronounced in the Full type and slight in the Empty type. In a few cases, the cause may be exhaustion of Heart-Yin, in which case the tremor will usually be a fine one.



Remember: a fine tremor may be due to the Heart and HE-7 is an important point to treat tremors, also those deriving from the Liver.

b) Rigidity of the neck

Observation

'Rigidity of the neck' indicates that the patient finds it difficult to bend the head forward or backward and to turn the head from side to side.

Clinical significance

In acute situations, rigidity of the neck may indicate an invasion of external Wind, in which case it will be accompanied by all the typical manifestations of an exterior invasion such as aversion to cold, fever, headache and a Floating pulse. Both Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat may cause rigidity of the neck but it is more likely to occur with an invasion of Wind-Cold (in fact, it is one of the chief symptoms of invasion of Wind-Cold as listed in the 'Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases').

Another possible acute condition causing stiffness of the neck occurs when external Cold and Dampness invade the muscles of the neck, in which case there is also pronounced neck pain: this is a case of acute Painful Obstruction Syndrome and it is relatively common.

In chronic cases, stiffness of the neck is due either to a weakness of the Bladder channel in the neck occurring against a background of Kidney deficiency or to internal Wind, both of which are more common in the elderly.

RIGIDITY OF THE NECK

- Invasion of external Wind: aversion to cold, Floating pulse
- Invasion of external Cold and Dampness: rigidity and pain
- Bladder and Kidney deficiency: slight rigidity and dizziness
- Internal Wind: pronounced rigidity and vertigo



CLINICAL NOTE

The distal points for rigidity of the neck are BL-60 Kunlun and SI-3 Houxi.

2. FACE

The face signs discussed are:

- a) Deviation of eye and mouth
- b) Facial paralysis (Bell's palsy)
- c) Facial tic

a) Deviation of eyes and mouth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Observation

Deviation of eyes and mouth consists in the mouth's being pulled toward the healthy side and an inability to close or open the eye completely; in addition, the

patient finds it difficult to grimace, to bulge the cheeks, grin and whistle.

Clinical significance

Deviation of eyes and mouth is a consequence of Wind-stroke and is usually seen in middle-aged or elderly people: it always indicates internal Wind affecting the muscles of the face.

When deviation of eyes and mouth follows a stroke, it is called central facial paralysis in Western medicine, as it arises from the central nervous system. In facial paralysis following Wind-stroke, the nerves above the eyes are not affected; that is, the movement of the eyebrows and furrowing of the forehead are normal. By contrast, in peripheral facial paralysis (Bell's palsy), the patient will be unable to raise the eyebrow or furrow the forehead on the paralysed side. [Figure 4.1](#) shows the deviation of eye and mouth.

b) Facial paralysis (Bell's palsy)

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Facial paralysis is due to an injury of peripheral nerves, while deviation of eyes and mouth following a stroke is due to the central nervous system. From a Chinese perspective, facial paralysis is due to an invasion of external Wind, while deviation of eyes and mouth following a stroke is due to internal Wind.



Figure 4.1. Deviation of eye and mouth.



Figure 4.2. Bell's palsy (facial paralysis).

Observation

Facial paralysis is characterized by deviation of the mouth, incomplete closure of one eye and inability to grimace, grin, bulge the cheeks, whistle, or raise the eyebrow and furrow the forehead on the affected side (Fig. 4.2).

Facial paralysis differs from deviation of the eye and mouth in that, in facial paralysis there is also uneven furrowing of the forehead while, in deviation of eye and mouth, there are no symptoms above the eyes (Fig. 4.3).

Clinical significance

Facial paralysis is due to invasion of external Wind in the muscles of the face and primarily in the Bright-Yang channels.

c) Facial tic

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 55

Observation

Tic consists of an involuntary twitching of the face muscles.

Clinical significance

In Chinese medicine a facial tic may be due to various patterns, among which are Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Blood deficiency, Liver-Wind, Liver-Wind with Phlegm and external Wind.

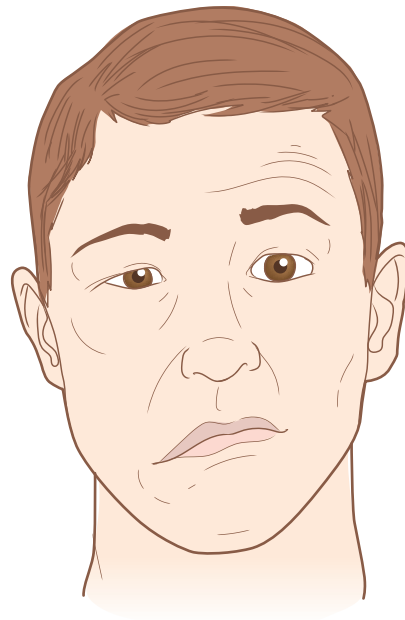


Figure 4.3. Bell's palsy.

When due to Liver-Qi stagnation, facial tic will be accompanied by irritability, depression, tendency to crying, abdominal distension, headache and a Wiry pulse.

Liver-Blood deficiency causes facial paralysis by failing to nourish the muscles of the face and giving rise to Empty Wind: other symptoms may include dizziness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion and a Choppy pulse.

Liver-Wind may lead to facial tic because it is in the nature of internal Wind to cause involuntary movements. Facial tic caused by Liver-Wind is more common in the elderly and is accompanied by vertigo, headache, loss of balance and a Wiry pulse.

In the elderly, Liver-Wind frequently combines with Phlegm, both of which may lead to facial tic. Other symptoms include vertigo, nausea, headache, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a tendency to being overweight, a Swollen tongue and a Wiry-Slippery pulse.

External Wind may cause a temporary facial tic.

FACIAL TIC

- Liver-Qi stagnation: irritability, depression, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Blood deficiency: dizziness, blurred vision, Choppy pulse
- Liver-Wind: vertigo, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Wind with Phlegm: vertigo, nausea, Wiry-Slippery pulse
- External Wind: temporary tic

3. LIMBS AND BODY

The limb and body signs discussed are:

- a) Paralysis
- b) Tremor or spasticity of the limbs
- c) Twitching of the muscles
- d) Opisthotonos
- e) Contraction of the limbs
- f) Hemiplegia
- g) Tremor of the hands
- h) Tremor of the feet
- i) Contraction of the fingers

a) Paralysis

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 68](#)

Paralysis is called *Tan Huan* in Chinese, which can be written with two different sets of characters, the second one of which means 'spread out' and 'relaxed' (see [Glossary](#)).

Observation

In paralysis, a weakness of the muscles of the four limbs impedes the proper function of the legs and/or arms. Paralysis is seen only in chronic, protracted conditions and is usually, but not always, accompanied by flaccidity of the muscles in which case, in Chinese medicine, it pertains to the disease category of Atrophy (*Wei* syndrome). In mild cases, paralysis consists in a weakness of arms or legs which creates a slowness of movement, while in severe cases movement of the arms and/or legs is severely impaired or completely impossible and the patient is confined to a wheelchair.

In Western medicine, this type of paralysis is frequently seen in spinal injuries or neurological diseases such as multiple sclerosis or motor-neurone disease.

Clinical significance

Paralysis may be due to many different patterns depending on the severity of the disease.

Generally speaking, in the beginning stages of paralysis there may be invasion of external Dampness occurring against a background of deficiency.

In the later stages, paralysis is often due to a general deficiency of Qi and Blood, and in particular a deficiency of Stomach and Spleen which become unable to transport Qi to the limbs.

In yet later stages, the main pattern emerging in paralysis is a deficiency of Liver and Kidneys which may

manifest with Yin or Yang deficiency. At such a stage, the condition is complicated by the possible development of pathogenic factors such as internal Wind (which may cause spasticity of the limbs), Blood stasis (which may cause pain in the limbs) or Phlegm (which may cause numbness of the limbs).

In acute febrile diseases which progress to the Blood level, Yin deficiency may develop, leading to the severe malnourishment of the channels and therefore to paralysis: this is, for example, the pathology of the paralysis deriving from poliomyelitis.

Of course, paralysis deriving from a spinal injury is different as it is due to external trauma and does not fall under any of the above patterns. However, in a patient suffering from a paralysis from spinal injury, this condition itself will, in time, lead to a deficiency of Stomach and Spleen.

THE FOUR STAGES OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

1. Dampness: numbness and tingling
2. Stomach and Spleen deficiency: difficulty in walking
3. Liver and Kidneys deficiency: severe difficulty in walking and urinary incontinence
4. Development of pathogenic factors: possibly Internal Wind (spasticity of limbs) or Blood stasis (pain in the limbs)



CLINICAL NOTE

Points for the four stages of multiple sclerosis:

1. Dampness: Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-5 Shimen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu
2. Stomach and Spleen deficiency: Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu
3. Liver and Kidney deficiency: LIV-8 Ququan, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-18 Ganshu
4. Development of pathogenic factors:
 - Internal Wind: LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, G.B.-31 Fengshi
5. Blood stasis: SP-10 Xuehai, BL-17 Geshu



CLINICAL NOTE

In addition to the points in the previous Clinical Note, one must also treat the channels with points similar to the ones used for Painful Obstruction Syndrome as follows:

- Arm: L.I.-10 Shousanli, T.B.-6 Zhigou, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-15 Jianyu
- Leg: ST-31 Biguan, G.B.-31 Fengshi, ST-34 Liangqiu, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-41 Jiexi

Note: ST-41 is an important point as it helps the patient to lift the feet better as they walk. In multiple sclerosis there is often a difficult lift of the feet which makes walking very difficult.

Multiple sclerosis is an example of paralysis that is commonly seen in Western, industrialized countries and one can identify clearly the above patterns in its pathological development. There are four stages in the pathological progression of multiple sclerosis. The very beginning stage is characterized by invasion of external Dampness and the symptoms are purely numbness and tingling. The second stage is characterized by deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen and at this stage the patient begins to experience difficulty in walking. The third stage is characterized by deficiency of Liver and Kidneys which fail to nourish the sinews and bones and the patient experiences severe difficulty in walking and urinary incontinence deriving from the Kidney deficiency. The fourth stage is characterized by the development of pathogenic factors which may be Internal Wind, itself deriving from the Liver and Kidney deficiency and causing spasticity of the limbs, or Blood stasis causing pain in the limbs.

PARALYSIS

- Invasion of external Dampness: slight weakness of the limbs, feeling of heaviness
- Deficiency of Qi and Blood (Stomach and Spleen): weakness of the limbs, difficulty in walking
- Deficiency of Liver and Kidneys: severe difficulty in walking

b) Tremor or spasticity of the limbs

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#) and [66](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 4 and 18](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

'Tremor or spasticity of the limbs' is a translation of the Chinese characters *zhi zhong*. *Zhi* means 'contraction or bending of the limbs' and *zhong* means 'relaxation or stretching of the limbs': however, these two terms may indicate both spasticity and tremor of the limbs.

Observation

The patient may suffer from contraction, relaxation or tremor of the limbs.

Clinical significance

Spasticity or tremor of the limbs may be due to many different patterns: Liver-Wind is the most likely pattern to cause this condition in its three possible manifestations: Full Wind deriving from Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire, Empty Wind deriving from Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency, or Wind combined with Phlegm. In cases of Full Wind, the spasticity or tremor of the

limbs is pronounced and the patient also suffers from pronounced vertigo; in cases of Empty Wind, the spasticity or tremor is mild and the patient will display the symptoms of Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency; when Wind combines with Phlegm the patient will also suffer from numbness and heaviness of the limbs, the tongue is Swollen and the pulse is Wiry-Slippy. Epilepsy is an example of a disease usually characterized by internal Wind and Phlegm.

The same symptoms may be caused by a general deficiency of Qi and Blood failing to nourish the sinews and muscles, in which case they are mild.

Spasticity and tremor of the limbs may also appear at the Blood level (of the Four Levels) when the Heat generated by the febrile disease either leads to Liver-Wind or depletes the Yin to such an extent that Empty Wind is generated

TREMOR OR SPASTICITY OF THE LIMBS

- Liver-Wind (Full type): severe spasticity or tremor with large amplitude, vertigo, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Wind (Empty type): mild spasticity or tremor with small amplitude, dizziness, Fine-Wiry pulse
- Liver-Wind with Phlegm: numbness and heaviness of the limbs, Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippy pulse
- Qi and Blood deficiency: mild spasticity or tremor of the limbs, tiredness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse

c) Twitching of the muscles

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 68](#)

Observation

Twitching of the muscles consists of an involuntary quivering or vibration of the superficial muscles: in Western medicine this is called fasciculation.

Clinical significance

Twitching of the muscles may be due to Yang deficiency, Water overflowing or Qi and Blood deficiency.

In Yang deficiency, twitching of the muscles is due to the Defensive Qi (which is Yang in nature) not nourishing the superficial muscles. [Chapter 3](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says: '*The refined part of Yang-Qi nourishes the Mind while the soft part nourishes the sinews.*'¹

Water overflowing indicates a condition of severe Yang deficiency leading to the accumulation of fluids which may occur in the Heart, the Lungs or the muscles. The accumulation of Water in the muscles may cause them to twitch.

General Qi and Blood deficiency may also cause twitching of the muscles when Yang Qi fails to nourish the superficial muscles and Blood fails to nourish the muscles and sinews.

TWITCHING OF THE MUSCLES

- Yang deficiency: feeling cold, tiredness, Deep-Slow pulse
- Water overflowing: oedema, coughing of profuse watery phlegm, Wet tongue
- Qi and Blood deficiency: tiredness, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse

d) Opisthotonos

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 68](#)

Observation

Opisthotonos indicates a spasm in which the head and heel are bent backward and the body bent forward ([Fig. 4.4](#)).

Clinical significance

Opisthotonos is always due to Liver-Wind which develops at the Blood level of a febrile disease. It may also occur after childbirth when the mother suffers from an infection but this is rarely seen in modern Western countries.

e) Contraction of the limbs

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

Observation

Contraction of the limbs consists in an involuntary clenching of the fists or contraction of the feet accompanied by rigidity of the affected limbs and the inability of the patient to stretch them. Contraction may affect any joint such as fingers, wrist, elbow, ankle and knees.

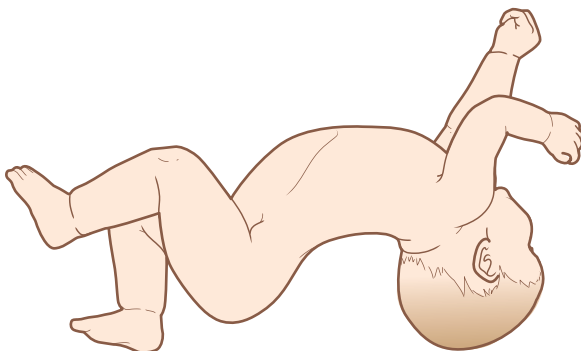


Figure 4.4. Opisthotonos.

Dupuytren's contracture, often involving the ring finger or the little finger, is an example of this condition.

Clinical significance

Contraction of the limbs may occur in various diseases such as arthritis, convulsions or Wind-stroke. The patterns causing it are usually general deficiency of Qi and Blood, internal Wind, Cold, Dampness, Phlegm or Blood stasis: in most cases the Liver and Kidney organs are particularly involved because they nourish sinews and bones.

A general deficiency of Qi and Blood may cause a contraction of a particular joint due to Blood not nourishing the sinews. For example, a deficiency of Blood may affect the channels of the elbow and cause a contraction of that joint.

Internal Wind may cause contraction of any joint and this is frequently seen after an attack of Wind-stroke.

Cold by its very nature has a tendency to contract and may therefore cause a contraction of any joint: frequently seen in Painful Obstruction Syndrome, this often affects the elbow or knee and is accompanied by pain.

Dampness may cause contraction of a joint by obstructing the sinews and muscles: this is also seen in Painful Obstruction Syndrome and it affects particularly the wrist or fingers, causing not only contraction but also swelling.

Phlegm may also cause contraction of a joint by obstructing the sinews, muscles and bones: this is seen in the late stages of Painful Obstruction Syndrome from Cold or Dampness complicated by Phlegm and it manifests not only with a contraction of the joint but also with bone deformities.

Blood stasis causes contraction and rigidity of joints because the Blood fails to nourish the sinews and bones and stagnates in the joints: this is seen also in the late stages of Painful Obstruction Syndrome from Dampness or Cold complicated by Blood stasis which causes intense pain and rigidity.

CONTRACTION OF THE LIMBS

- Qi and Blood deficiency: mild contraction, tiredness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse
- Liver-Wind: pronounced contraction, vertigo, Wiry pulse
- Cold: pronounced contraction and pain, feeling cold, ameliorated by heat
- Dampness: contraction of joints with swelling, feeling of heaviness
- Phlegm: contraction of joints with swelling and bone deformities
- Blood stasis: contraction and rigidity of joints with severe pain, Purple tongue

f) Hemiplegia

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 68](#)

Observation

Hemiplegia consists of the unilateral paralysis of the arm and/or leg.

Clinical significance

Hemiplegia is seen in the sequelae stage of Wind-stroke and the main patterns causing it are Liver-Wind and Phlegm. In protracted cases, after a Wind-stroke, Blood stasis may also develop which causes pronounced rigidity and pain of the limbs in addition to the paralysis.



CLINICAL NOTE

In hemiplegia, one must treat the channels with points similar to the ones used for Painful Obstruction Syndrome as follows:

- Arm: L.I.-10 Shousanli, T.B.-6 Zhigou, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-15 Jianyu.
- Leg: ST-31 Biguan, G.B.-31 Fengshi, ST-34 Liangqiu, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-41 Jiexi.

Note: ST-41 is an important point as it helps the patient to lift the feet better as they walk. In multiple sclerosis there is often a difficult lift of the feet which makes walking very difficult.

g) Tremor of the hands

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

Observation

'Tremor of the hands' consists of an involuntary tremor of the hands or of the whole arm: the tremor may be very pronounced and with wide amplitude or very slight with a small amplitude. It may be unilateral or bilateral. The patient has difficulty holding a book, a spoon or a cup.

Clinical significance

Tremor of the hands always indicates internal Wind. Internal Wind may, in turn, develop from Liver-Yang rising, Liver-Fire, Liver-Blood deficiency or Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency. When it derives from Liver-Yang or Liver-Fire, the Wind is of a Full nature and the tremor is pronounced; when it derives from a deficiency, the Wind is of an Empty nature and the tremor is slight. In addition to the above patterns, in the elderly internal Wind is frequently complicated by Phlegm.

In alcoholics, a fine tremor of the hands is caused by Phlegm-Heat. In rare cases, retention of Dampness in the muscles and sinews of the hands may also cause a fine tremor.

h) Tremor of the feet

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

Observation

'Tremor of the feet' consists of an involuntary tremor of the feet or of the whole leg which may be unilateral or bilateral. The patient has difficulty in walking and there may be atrophy of the lower limb.

Clinical significance

Tremor of the feet or legs is usually due to internal Wind of the Empty type; that is, deriving from Liver-Blood deficiency or Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency.

i) Contraction of the fingers

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#).

Observation

'Contraction of the fingers', which may be unilateral or bilateral, consists of an involuntary contracture of the fingers and permanent bending with inability to stretch the hand; the movement of the muscles and sinews above the wrist is normal.

Clinical significance

Contraction of the fingers is due either to deficiency of Blood and/or Yin or to invasion of Cold in the sinews and muscles, as in Painful Obstruction Syndrome. In the former case, the deficient Blood fails to nourish the sinews which, in time, contract from lack of fluids; in the latter case, external Cold invades the sinews and muscles of the hands causing them to contract.



CHAPTER 4 LEARNING OUTCOMES

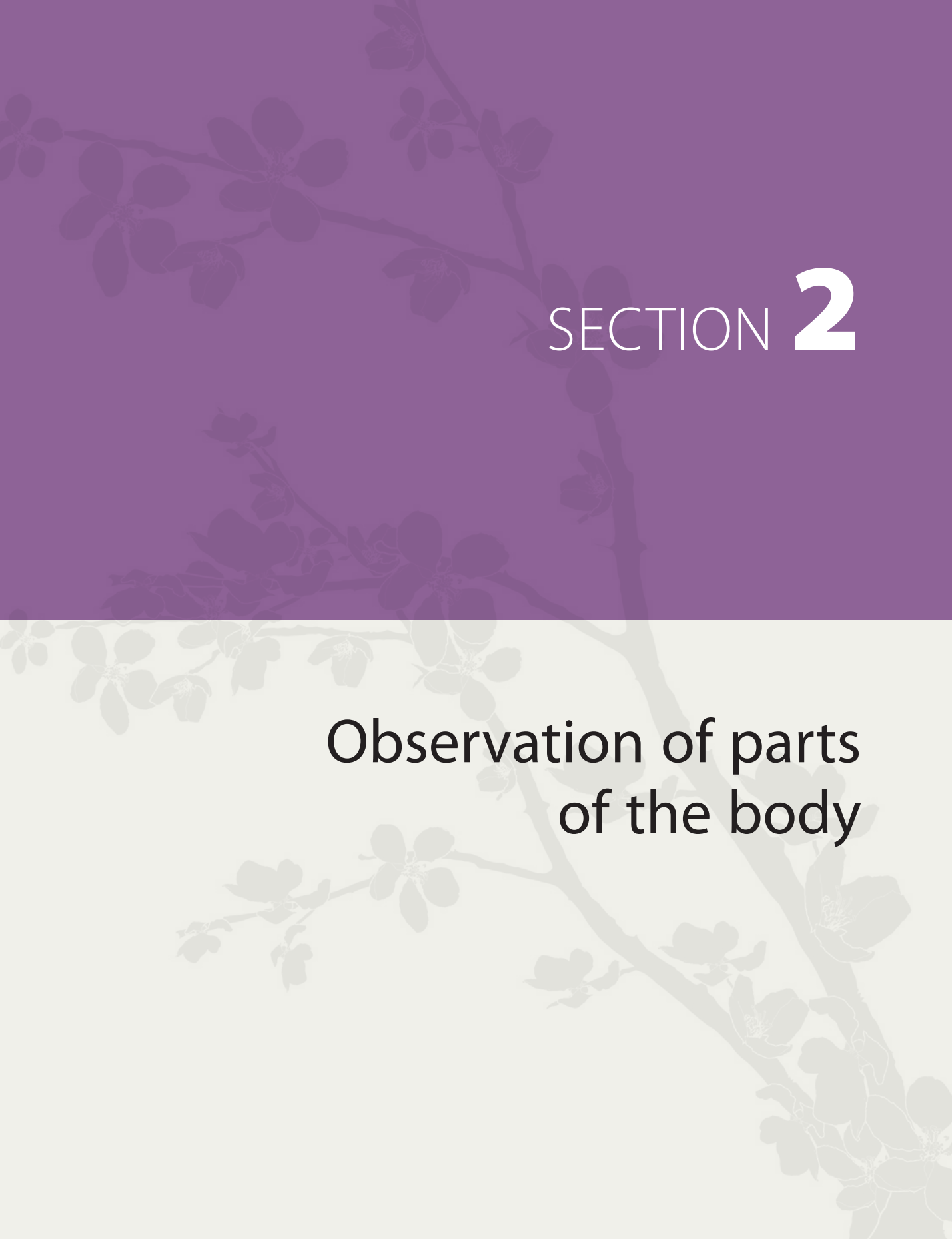
The student now should understand:

- Observation of body movements includes involuntary motion, and rigidity or paralysis of the head, face, limbs and body.

END NOTE

1. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 17.

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SECTION 2

Observation of parts of the body

Section 2 of Part 1 discusses the observation of individual parts of the body. Section 1 dealt with the observation of the body shape, complexion, and mental-emotional characteristics. These are the main things we would observe as the patient walks into our consulting room, and they therefore give us the broad picture of that patient's constitution and potential disharmony.

After observing these general traits, we proceed to observing individual parts of the body, generally starting from the top and proceeding downwards. Some of these parts are observable as the patient speaks to us, and some only when the person undresses and lies on the couch. Moreover, some of these parts are observed routinely (e.g. ears, hair, mouth, etc.), and some only if the patient asks us to (e.g. genitals and women's breasts). Observation of the two excretions has been added here for completion, although it is not carried out under normal clinical circumstances; this might be carried out if we see a patient in his or her own home for an acute condition.

It is important to precede observation of individual parts of the body with the observation of the body shape and demeanour as a whole, as described in Section 1. We should not give disproportionate importance to an individual part of the body (e.g. the ears) at the expense

of observation of the body shape and demeanour as a whole.

The parts discussed and their relevant chapters are:

[Chapter 5](#) Head, face, and hair

[Chapter 6](#) Eyes

[Chapter 7](#) Nose

[Chapter 8](#) Lips, mouth, palate, teeth, gums, and philtrum

[Chapter 9](#) Ears

[Chapter 10](#) Throat and neck

[Chapter 11](#) Chest and back

[Chapter 12](#) Women's breasts

[Chapter 13](#) Heartbeat

[Chapter 14](#) Hands

[Chapter 15](#) Nails

[Chapter 16](#) Abdomen

[Chapter 17](#) Genitalia

[Chapter 18](#) Limbs

[Chapter 19](#) Legs

[Chapter 20](#) Excretions

[Chapter 21](#) Skin

[Chapter 22](#) Children

Observation of the facial colours has already been discussed in [Chapter 3](#).

Observation of the Head, Face and Hair

5

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Head

Dry scalp

Redness and pain of the scalp

Tremor of the head

Swelling of the whole head

Boils on the scalp

Ulcers on the scalp

Ulcers in the mastoid region

Erosion of the scalp

Head leaning to one side

Head tilted backwards

Late closure of the fontanelles

Face

Acne

Papular/macular eruptions

Oedema of the face

Swelling and redness of the face

Swelling, redness and pain of the cheeks

Ulcers below the zygomatic arch

Lines on the face

Deviation of eye and mouth

Hair

Hair falling out

Alopecia

Dry and brittle hair

Greasy hair

Premature greying of the hair

Dandruff

- f) Ulcers on the Scalp
- g) Ulcers in the Mastoid Region
- h) Erosion of the Scalp
- i) Head Leaning to One Side
- j) Head Tilted Backwards
- k) Late Closure of the Fontanelles

2. Face

- a) Acne
- b) Papular/Macular Eruptions
- c) Oedema of the Face
- d) Swelling and Redness of the Face
- e) Swelling, Redness and Pain of the Cheeks
- f) Ulcers Below the Zygomatic Arch
- g) Lines on the Face
- h) Deviation of Eye and Mouth

3. Hair

- a) Hair Falling Out
- b) Alopecia
- c) Dry and Brittle Hair
- d) Greasy Hair
- e) Premature Greying of the Hair
- f) Dandruff

1. HEAD

In observation of the head, one should first of all make a general assessment of the patient's constitution based on the facial features. A person with a good constitution will generally have a head with smooth features, a broad forehead and long ears with thick ear-lobes. A person with a poor constitution will have a head that is too small or with uneven features and small ears with small ear-lobes.

The features discussed are as follows:

- a) Dry scalp
- b) Redness and pain of the scalp
- c) Tremor of the head
- d) Swelling of the whole head
- e) Boils on the scalp

Observation of the head, face and hair will be discussed under the following headings:

1. Head

- a) Dry Scalp
- b) Redness and Pain of the Scalp
- c) Tremor of the Head
- d) Swelling of the Whole Head
- e) Boils on the Scalp

- f) Ulcers on the scalp
- g) Ulcers in the mastoid region
- h) Erosion of the scalp
 - i) Head leaning to one side
 - j) Head tilted backwards
- k) Late closure of the fontanelles

a) Dry scalp

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

A dry scalp indicates Liver- and/or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

b) Redness and pain of the scalp

Redness and pain of the scalp indicate either an acute invasion of Wind-Heat or the flaring up of Liver-Fire.

c) Tremor of the head

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#)

Tremor of the head indicates internal Wind and it is seen in Parkinson's Disease in the elderly.

d) Swelling of the whole head

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

A swelling of the face and the whole head with redness of the eyes is called 'Big Head Warm Disease' which is due to Toxic Heat invading the Upper Burner and is often seen in parotitis.

e) Boils on the scalp

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Boils on the scalp are due to Liver-Fire, Damp-Heat in the Liver channel, or Toxic Heat.

f) Ulcers on the scalp

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Ulcers on the scalp are due to Liver-Fire, Damp-Heat in the Liver channel, or, if they are in the region of Du-20 Baihui, Heat in the Governing Vessel.

g) Ulcers in the mastoid region

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Ulcers in the mastoid region are due to Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder channel or to Liver-Fire.

h) Erosion of the scalp

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Erosion of the scalp (when the skin is broken) with itching and oozing of a fluid is due to Damp-Heat in the Liver channel.

i) Head leaning to one side

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

If the head leans to one side and the patient is unable to keep it straight, this is due to either a Deficiency and sinking of Spleen-Qi or a Deficiency of the Sea of Marrow.

j) Head tilted backwards

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

If the head is tilted backwards with eyes rolled up, this indicates internal Wind which is frequently seen in acute febrile diseases in children.

k) Late closure of the fontanelles

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 90](#)

In babies, one should observe the fontanelles: late closure of the fontanelles indicates poor hereditary Kidney constitution. The posterior fontanelle usually closes about two months after birth; the sphenoid fontanelle closes at about three months; the mastoid fontanelle closes near the end of the first year; and the anterior fontanelle may not close completely until the middle or end of the second year.

HEAD SIGNS

- Dry scalp: Liver- and/or Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Red and painful scalp: Wind-Heat or Liver-Fire
- Tremor of head: Liver-Wind
- Swelling of head and face: Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat (parotitis)
- Boils on scalp: Liver-Fire, Damp-Heat or Toxic Heat
- Ulcers on scalp: Liver-Fire or Damp-Heat
- Ulcers in the mastoid region: Damp-Heat in Gall-Bladder channel or Liver-Fire
- Erosion of skull with itching and oozing: Damp-Heat in the Liver channel
- Head leaning to one side: Spleen-Qi deficiency or deficiency of Sea of Marrow
- Head tilted backwards with eyes rolled up: Liver-Wind.

2. FACE

The most important aspect of observation of the face is the complexion colour which has already been described in [Chapter 3](#). Other diagnostic signs of the face include oedema, swelling, spots, ulcers and lines.

The following features are discussed:

- a) Acne
- b) Papular/macular eruptions
- c) Oedema of the face
- d) Swelling and redness of the face
- e) Swelling, redness and pain of the cheeks
- f) Ulcers below the zygomatic arch
- g) Lines on the face
- h) Deviation of eye and mouth

a) Acne

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 55 and 77](#); Part 1 Observation, Chapter 5

Acne on the face with red papules is generally due to Damp-Heat, in chronic conditions occurring against a background of Qi deficiency. In severe cases when there are pustules that are very large and painful, it is due to Toxic Heat. If the pustules are of a dull-purplish colour, there is Blood stasis ([Figs. 5.1–5.3](#)).



Figure 5.1. Acne with red papules (Damp-Heat).



Chinese texts all attribute acne to Damp-Heat or Toxic Heat, which is certainly the case. However, when acne occurs in adolescents, in my experience there is always a pathology of the Directing Vessel (Ren Mai) and/or Penetrating Vessel (Chong Mai) which explains the location of acne on the face which is reached by both vessels. Therefore, in addition to the points that treat Damp-Heat or Toxic Heat, I also use LU-7 Lieque and KI-6 Zhaohai for the Directing Vessel and SP-4 Gongsun and P-6 Neiguan for the Penetrating Vessel.



CLINICAL NOTE

For acne from Damp-Heat I would use the following points: L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu (in addition to the points opening the Directing Vessel or Penetrating Vessel as explained above)



Figure 5.2. Acne with pustules (Toxic Heat).



Figure 5.3. Acne with dark pustules (Blood stasis).

b) Papular/macular eruptions

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Papular eruptions on the face and nose indicate Lung-Heat while macular eruptions indicate Blood-Heat.

c) Oedema of the face

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Acute oedema of the face is due to invasion of the Lungs by Wind-Water; chronic oedema of the face is due to Spleen- and Lung-Yang deficiency.

d) Swelling and redness of the face

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Acute swelling and redness of the face indicate invasion of Toxic Heat such as is seen in infectious febrile diseases.

e) Swelling, redness and pain of the cheeks

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Swelling, redness and pain of the cheeks and below the mandible indicates invasion of Toxic Heat and it is usually seen in parotitis.

f) Ulcers below the zygomatic arch

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Ulcers below the zygomatic arch are due to Toxic Heat in the Stomach.

g) Lines on the face

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

If there are lines on the face and the skin has a very uneven surface, this indicates Blood deficiency or Heat with dryness, usually related to emotional stress.

h) Deviation of eye and mouth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#)

A deviation of the eye and mouth that does not affect the eyebrows and forehead is due to internal Wind and is seen in patients suffering from Wind-stroke. A deviation of the eye and mouth with an inability to raise one eyebrow and furrowing of the forehead on one side

indicates invasion of external Wind in the channels of the face and it is seen in Bell's palsy.

FACE SIGNS

- Acute oedema: invasion of Lungs by Wind-Water
- Chronic oedema: Lung- and Spleen-Yang deficiency
- Acute swelling and redness: Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat
- Acute swelling, redness and pain below mandible: Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat (parotitis)
- Ulcers below zygomatic arch: Toxic Heat in Stomach
- Papules on face and nose: Lung-Heat (Qi level)
- Macules on face and nose: Blood Heat
- Lined face with uneven skin surface: Blood deficiency or Heat and Dryness
- Deviation of eye and mouth (not affecting eyebrows and forehead): facial paralysis from Wind-stroke
- Deviation of eye and mouth (affecting eyebrows and forehead): peripheral facial paralysis (Bell's Palsy)

3. HAIR

The development of the head and hair depends largely on the state of the Kidneys and Liver. The Kidneys influence the bones, which determines the structure of the head, and they govern the Marrow, which determines the normal development of the brain. Both Kidneys and Liver influence the growth of hair and therefore its normal growth, colour and consistency depend on the Liver and Kidneys.

The patterns causing each of the hair signs discussed below are listed in greater detail in [Chapter 55](#).

The following conditions are discussed:

- a) Hair falling out
- b) Alopecia
- c) Dry and brittle hair
- d) Greasy hair
- e) Premature greying of the hair
- f) Dandruff

a) Hair falling out

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Observation

The term "falling out" refers to a gradual loss of hair, or to its slow growth, or to excessively thin hair.

Clinical significance

The growth and the thickness of the hair depend largely on the state of the Liver and Kidneys and specifically on Liver-Blood and Kidney-Essence: therefore, a gradual loss of hair may be due to Liver-Blood deficiency and/or Kidney-Essence deficiency. However, there are also Full causes of loss of hair and in particular Blood Heat which causes the hair to fall out by drying out the hair follicles; this Blood Heat usually derives from Liver-Fire which rises up to the head causing the loss of hair.

Loss of hair frequently occurs after a serious disease that is either acute or chronic and lingering. Of course there may also be external causes of hair loss and an example of these is the loss occurring after a course of chemotherapy.

In some cases, baldness can occur in young people. If a young person shows no sign of Liver and/or Kidney deficiency and has a strong body, this means that the baldness is a hereditary trait and has no clinical significance.

HAIR FALLING OUT

- Liver-Blood and/or Kidney-Essence deficiency
- Blood Heat (from Liver-Fire)
- Serious, acute disease
- Chronic, protracted disease
- Chemotherapy

b) Alopecia

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Observation

Alopecia refers to the sudden loss of hair which usually falls out in clumps.

Clinical significance

Alopecia may be due to several factors: first, Blood Heat (usually deriving from Liver-Fire) which dries out the hair follicles; or internal Wind rising to the head; or Blood stasis, when the stagnant Blood in the head prevents new Blood from nourishing the hair.

c) Dry and brittle hair

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

ALOPECIA

- Blood Heat: hair falling out in clumps, dry hair, feeling of heat, thirst, Red tongue, Rapid pulse
- Internal Wind: hair falling out in clumps, giddiness, Wiry pulse
- Blood stasis: hair falling out in clumps, dark complexion, Purple tongue

Observation

The description refers to hair that is dry, brittle and excessively thin.

Clinical significance

The most common cause of dry and brittle hair is deficiency of Liver-Blood and/or Kidney-Yin: as the Liver and Kidneys are the main organs that nourish the hair, this makes the hair dry, thin and brittle.

A general deficiency of Qi and Blood usually involving Liver-Blood may also cause the hair to become dry and brittle for the same reasons indicated above.

A deficiency of Stomach and Spleen may cause the hair to become excessively thin and brittle when it is not nourished by the Food Essences produced by the Stomach. This condition is often caused by worry, pensiveness or excessive studying that weakens the Spleen.

A chronic loss of blood, such as might happen in chronic menorrhagia, may also cause the hair to become dry and thin because there is not enough Blood to nourish it.

DRY AND BRITTLE HAIR

- Liver-Blood and/or Kidney-Essence deficiency
- General Qi and Blood deficiency
- Stomach and Spleen deficiency
- Chronic loss of blood

d) Greasy hair

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Greasy hair is always a sign of Dampness (with or without Heat) or Phlegm.

e) Premature greying of the hair

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Observation

'Premature greying of the hair' refers to the hair becoming grey or white too early in a person's life: of course, whitening of the hair with age is normal and does not indicate a pathology.

Clinical significance

The most common cause of premature greying of the hair is deficiency of Liver-Blood and/or Kidney-Essence which fail to nourish the hair properly; another cause is a general Qi and Blood deficiency. Hair turning white suddenly is usually due to Liver- and Heart-Fire caused by a shock or a very intense emotional upset such as anger.

Premature greying of the hair in a young person who has a strong body and is in good health is purely hereditary and has no clinical significance.

Hair turning yellow and dry usually indicates deficiency of Blood and Essence.

PREMATURE GREYING OF THE HAIR

- Liver-Blood and/or Kidney-Essence deficiency
- General Qi and Blood deficiency
- Liver- and Heart-Fire
- Hereditary

f) Dandruff

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Observation

Dandruff consists of small, white, dry scales which slough off the scalp.

Clinical significance

The most common cause of dandruff is Liver-Blood that is deficient and fails to nourish the scalp. If the production of dandruff is profuse and it comes in bouts, it is due to Liver-Wind usually stemming from Liver-Blood deficiency.

Dandruff may also be due to Heat conditions; in particular, Liver-Fire, Damp-Heat in the Liver affecting the head, or Toxic Heat.



CHAPTER 5 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Size and symmetry of facial features indicate a person's constitution.
- Examination should include that of: movement and orientation of the head, skin quality and presence of boils, ulcers or swelling, lines and deviations.
- Hair lustre, colour and presence of dandruff should be observed.

Observation of the Eyes

6

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Relationship between the internal organs and the eyes

The eyes and the liver

The eyes and the kidneys

The eyes and the heart

The eyes and the stomach and spleen

The eyes and the gall-bladder

The eyes and the bladder

The eyes and the small intestine

The five wheels

The eight ramparts

The eye system

Aspects of observation of the eyes

The lustre of the eyes

The control of the eyes

The normal eye

Observation of pathological signs of the eye

Colour

Other features

The channels coursing through or around the eyes are illustrated in [Fig. 6.1](#). The pathways of the channels coursing through or around the eyes are as follows:

- The Stomach Main channel goes to the eye and connects with BL-1 Jingming.
- The Stomach Muscle channel connects with muscles around the orbit and with the Bladder muscle channel.
- The Stomach Divergent channel goes to the forehead and down to enter the eye.
- The Heart Main, Connecting and Divergent channels all flow to the eye.
- The Bladder Main channel goes to the inner corner of the eye.
- The Bladder Muscle channel binds around the orbit
- The Liver Main channel goes through the eye on its way to the vertex.

- The Gall-Bladder Main and Muscle channels go to the outer corner of the eye.
- The Directing and Penetrating Vessels go to the lower orbit of the eye (not shown in [Fig. 6.1](#)).
- The Yin and Yang Heel Vessels go to BL-1 Jingming (not shown in [Fig. 6.1](#)).

From a Five-Element perspective, the eyes are the outlet of the Liver. [Chapter 4](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says: *'The East direction corresponds to the colour green and to the Liver which opens into the orifice of the eyes'*.¹ However, many other organs influence the eyes and, particularly from a diagnostic point of view, the eyes reflect the state of all the internal organs and therefore of the Mind and Spirit.

In particular, the eyes reflect the state of the Mind and Spirit because of the close connection between the eyes and the Heart. In fact, [Chapter 81](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says: *'The Heart transports the Essence of the five Yin organs to the eyes; if the eyes are brilliant and with lustre, it shows that the person is happy and Qi is harmonious. If, on the contrary, the eyes lack lustre it indicates that the person is afflicted by worry and this is reflected in the brilliance of the eyes'*.² The same Chapter of the 'Simple Questions' says: *'The Spirit and the Essence of the Heart gather in the eyes'*.³

However, as mentioned above, many other organs influence the eyes. [Chapter 4](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'Qi and Blood of the twelve channels and of the fifteen Connecting channels reach the orifices of the face so that the Yang-Qi brightens the eyes'*.⁴ [Chapter 71](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'By observing the five colours of the eyes, one can determine the state of the five Yin organs and therefore the prognosis'*.⁵

Therefore, as we can see, the essences and fluids of all the internal organs nourish and moisten the eyes: for this reason, the eyes can reflect the state of most internal organs and not just the Liver, to which they are related within the Five-Element scheme of correspondences. The 'Spiritual Axis' in [Chapter 80](#) says: *'The Essence of*

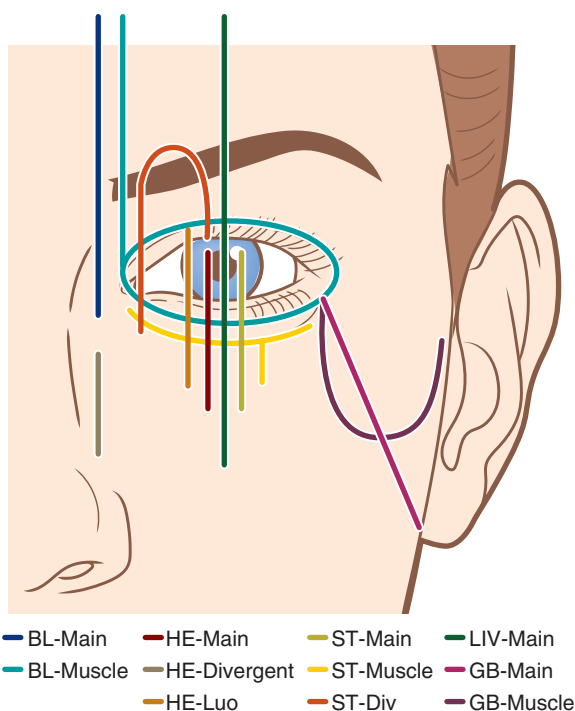


Figure 6.1. Channels coursing through the eyes.

the five Yin and six Yang organs all reach the eyes which are the 'nest' of the Essence. The Essence of the bones [and therefore of the Kidneys] manifests in the pupil; the Essence of the sinews [and therefore of the Liver] manifests in the iris; the Essence of Blood [and therefore of the Heart] manifests in the blood vessels and the canthus [of the eye]; the Essence of Qi [and therefore of the Lungs] manifests on the sclera; the Essence of the muscles [and therefore of the Spleen] manifests in the eyelids; therefore, the Essence of bones, sinews, blood and Qi together with the blood vessels form the Eye System which goes upwards entering the brain and backwards exiting at the nape of the neck'.⁶

This statement from the 'Spiritual Axis' is important in two ways. First, it establishes a connection between the internal organs and the five parts of the eye that are called the Five Wheels. The Five Wheels are the pupil (corresponding to the Kidneys), the iris (corresponding to the Liver), the sclera (corresponding to the Lungs), the two corners of the sclera (corresponding to the Heart) and the eyelids (corresponding to the Spleen). Second, this Chapter of the 'Spiritual Axis' describes an 'Eye System' composed of all the channels reaching the eye which enter the brain and exit at the nape of the neck.

The same Chapter of the 'Spiritual Axis' also says: *'The eyes manifest the Essence of the five Yin and six Yang organs, the Nutritive and Defensive Qi, and they are the place where the Qi of the Mind is generated...the eyes are the messengers of the Heart which houses the Mind. If the Mind and Essence are not co-ordinated and not transmitted one has visual hallucinations. The Mind, Ethereal Soul and Corporeal Soul are scattered so that one has bewildering perceptions'.⁷*

In conclusion, in diagnosis the eyes reflect the state of all the organs and of the Mind and Spirit.



Remember: The eyes reflect the state of all the organs (not just the Liver) and of the Mind and Spirit.

The discussion of observation of the eyes will first of all look at the various physiological relationships between the eyes and various organs. After discussing the physiological relationships between the Internal Organs and the eye, we shall discuss the particular aspects of the eyes that should be observed in clinical practice.

The various pathological colours of the sclera will be discussed and, finally, various other signs appearing in the eyes will be discussed.

Therefore, the discussion will be articulated in the following topics:

1. Relationship between the Internal Organs and the eyes
 - a) The eyes and the Liver
 - b) The eyes and the Kidneys
 - c) The eyes and the Heart
 - d) The eyes and the Stomach and Spleen
 - e) The eyes and the Gall-Bladder
 - f) The eyes and the Bladder
 - g) The eyes and the Small Intestine
 - h) The Five Wheels
 - i) The Eight Ramparts
 - j) The Eye System
2. Aspects of Observation of the Eyes
 - a) The lustre of the eyes
 - b) The control of the eyes
 - c) The normal eye
3. Observation of pathological signs of the eyes
 1. Colour
 - a) Yellow
 - b) Red
 - c) Bluish-greenish
 - d) Dark

2. Other Features

- a) White specks
- b) Protruding eyeball
- c) Sunken eyeball
- d) Strabismus
- e) Staring, fixed eyes
- f) Abnormal colour of the eyelids
- g) Swollen eyelids
- h) Streaming eyes
- i) Discharge from the eyes
- j) Abnormal colours of the corners of the eyes
- k) Abnormal colours of the eye sockets

Please note that many more signs related to the eyes are discussed in Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#).

1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTERNAL ORGANS AND THE EYES

a) The eyes and the liver

The relationship between the eyes and the Liver is, of course, very well known due to the Five-Element correspondence. Liver-Blood nourishes the eyes and produces normal vision. For example, in [Chapter 17](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: '*Liver-Qi reaches the eyes, when the Liver is harmonized the eyes can distinguish the five colours*'.⁸ It also says: '*The Liver stores Blood which allows us to see*'.⁹

[Chapter 5](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says: '*The Liver governs the eyes*'¹⁰; and [Chapter 4](#): '*The East corresponds to the green colour and the Liver which opens into the eyes*'.¹¹

Liver-Yin also nourishes the eyes and, more specifically, it moistens them; in fact, dry eyes are often a symptom of Liver-Yin deficiency, whereas blurred vision is a symptom of Liver-Blood deficiency.



CLINICAL NOTE

The Liver channel points that influence the eye are LIV-3 Taichong and LIV-2 Xingjian

b) The eyes and the kidneys

Like Liver-Blood, the Kidneys nourish the eyes; they also moisten the eyes and control the normal fluids that lubricate them. In fact, the Kidneys nourish and moisten the eyes in a way that is as important as that of the Liver.

Many eye problems, especially in the elderly, are due to Kidney-Yin deficiency. For example, blurred vision and dry eyes are often due to a Kidney deficiency and

especially Kidney-Yin deficiency. The Kidneys also influence the intra-ocular pressure and glaucoma is often due to a Kidney deficiency.



CLINICAL NOTE

The Kidney channel points that influence the eye are KI-6 Zhaohai and KI-3 Taixi.

c) The eyes and the heart

The Heart Main channel reaches the eye internally; the Heart Connecting channel also reaches the eye; and the Heart Divergent channel connects with the Small Intestine channel at the inner canthus of the eyes.

The 'Spiritual Axis' in [Chapter 10](#) says: '*The Heart channel connects with the Eye System*'.¹² In [Chapter 11](#) it says: '*The Divergent channel of the Heart connects with the Eye System*'.¹³ The same Chapter says: '*The Heart channel reaches the face and connects with the inner canthus of the eye*'.¹⁴

Therefore, Heart-Blood also nourishes the eye in a similar way to Liver-Blood, or, to put it differently, for Blood to reach the eye it needs the transporting action of Heart-Qi. The 'Simple Questions' also mentions the connection between the eye and the Heart in several places, and [Chapter 81](#) says: '*The Spirit and the Essence of the Heart gather in the eye*'.¹⁵ It also says: '*The Heart is the focus of the Essence of the five Yin organs and its orifice is the eye*'.¹⁶ The 'Spiritual Axis' in [Chapter 80](#) says: '*The eye is the ambassador of the Heart*'.¹⁷

The significance of all the above statements is twofold. First, like the Liver, the Heart nourishes the eye and therefore many eye problems are related to a Heart pathology. Second, the Essence of the Heart, and therefore the Mind and Spirit, manifests in the eyes: this is an extremely important aspect of diagnosis as a careful observation of the eyes reveals the state of the Mind and Spirit.



CLINICAL NOTE

The Heart channel point that influences the eye is HE-5 Tongli.

d) The eyes and the stomach and spleen

The Stomach channel is closely connected to the eye because it starts just under the orbit of the eye. The Spleen influences the eyelids and the muscles that control their opening and closing.

Chapter 62 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'Stomach-Qi flows upwards to the Lungs and on to the head via the throat and connects with the Eye System and from here enters the brain'.¹⁸ Chapter 31 of the 'Simple Questions' says: 'The Bright Yang controls the muscles and its channel flows to the nose and eyes'.¹⁹

Chapter 21 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The leg Bright Yang channel goes to the nose, the mouth and enters the Eye System'.²⁰ Both the Divergent and the Muscle channels of the Stomach enter the eye. Chapter 13 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Muscle channel of the Stomach... connects with the Greater Yang channel which controls the upper eyelid, while the Bright Yang channel controls the lower eyelid'.²¹ However, the prevalent view is that the Spleen controls both eyelids.



CLINICAL NOTE

The Stomach channel point that influences the eye is ST-36 Zusanli.

e) The eyes and the gall-bladder

The Gall-Bladder channel is closely connected to the eye because it starts at its outer corner. Chapter 10 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Gall-Bladder channel starts from the lateral corner of the eye'.²² Chapter 11 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Gall-Bladder Divergent channel... scatters on the face, enters the Eye System and joins the Main channel at the external corner of the eye'.²³ Chapter 13 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Muscle channel of the Gall-Bladder... binds around the external corner of the eye'.²⁴ Thus, both the Divergent and Muscle channels of the Gall-Bladder reach the eye.



CLINICAL NOTE

The Gall-Bladder channel points that influence the eye are G.B.-1 Tongziliao, G.B.-44 Zuqiaoyin and G.B.-37 Guangming.

f) The eyes and the bladder

The Bladder channel, which starts at the inner corner of the eye, strongly influences the eye. Chapter 10 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Bladder channel starts at the inner corner of the eye'.²⁵ The Bladder Muscle channel is wrapped around the eye socket. Chapter 21 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The leg Greater Yang channel penetrates the occiput, enters the brain, it connects with the eye and is called the Eye System'.²⁶



CLINICAL NOTE

The Bladder channel points that influence the eye are BL-1 Jingming and BL-67 Zhiyin.

g) The eyes and the small intestine

Chapter 10 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'A branch of the Small Intestine channel departing from the clavicle, goes to the neck and cheek to reach the lateral corner of the eye... another branch reaches the nose and arrives at the inner corner of the eye'.²⁷ The Muscle channel of the Small Intestine also reaches the outer corner of the eye.



CLINICAL NOTE

The Small Intestine channel point that influences the eye is S.I.-6 Yanglao.

Figure 6.2 illustrates the relationship between the Internal Organs and the eyes.

THE EYES AND INTERNAL ORGANS

- Liver: Liver-Blood nourishes the eyes
- Kidneys: Kidney-Yin nourishes and moistens the eyes
- Heart: Heart-Blood nourishes the eyes; Heart-Qi transports Qi and Blood to the eyes
- Stomach and Spleen: Stomach transports food essences to the eyes: Stomach's Main, Muscle and Divergent channels reach the eyes; the Spleen controls the eyelids
- Gall-Bladder: the Gall-Bladder's Main, Divergent and Muscle channels reach the outer corner of the eyes; G.B.-1 connects with the Eye system
- Bladder: the Bladder's Main and Muscle channels reach the eyes; BL-1 connects with the Eye system
- Small Intestine: the Small Intestine's Main and Muscle channels reach the eyes

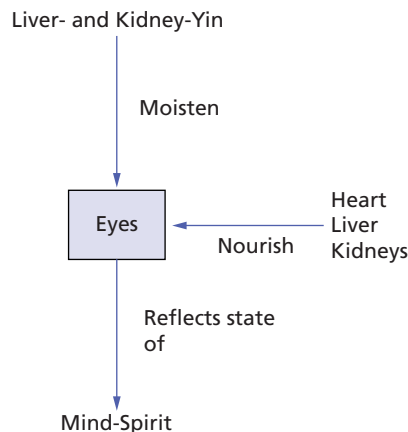


Figure 6.2. Relationship of Internal Organs with the eyes.

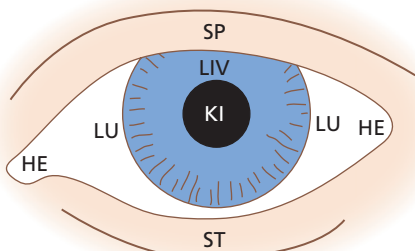


Figure 6.3. The Five Wheels of the eye.



Remember: the Liver is *not* the only organ that influences the eyes.

h) The five wheels

The 'Five Wheels' is an ancient expression to indicate five areas of the eyes: pupil, iris, corners of the sclera, the rest of the sclera, and the eyelids. These Five Wheels are the Water Wheel, the Wind Wheel, the Blood Wheel, the Qi Wheel, and the Muscle Wheel, respectively (Fig. 6.3).

The Five Wheels are as follows:

- The Water Wheel is the pupil, it is the essence of the bones and pertains to the Kidneys.
- The Wind Wheel is the iris; it is the essence of the sinews and pertains to the Liver.
- The Blood Wheel is the corners of the sclera of the eyes; it is the essence of the Blood and pertains to the Heart.
- The Qi Wheel is the rest of the sclera; it is the essence of Qi and pertains to the Lungs.
- The Muscle Wheel is the eyelids; it is the essence of the muscles and pertains to the Stomach and Spleen.

The significance of the Five Wheels is that they establish a physiological relationship between the respective five parts of the eye and the internal organs. For example, the pupil pertains to the Kidneys, and if it is excessively dilated, it may indicate Kidney-Yang deficiency; the iris pertains to the Liver, and its inflammation may indicate Liver-Heat; the sclera pertains to the Lungs, and a change in its colour or texture may indicate a Lung pathology, such as Lung-Heat; the corners of the eye pertain to the Heart, and a redness there may indicate Heart-Fire; the eyelids pertain to the Stomach and Spleen, and if, for example, they are drooping, this may indicate sinking of Spleen-Qi, whereas if they are swollen and red, this indicates Spleen-Heat. However, as always in

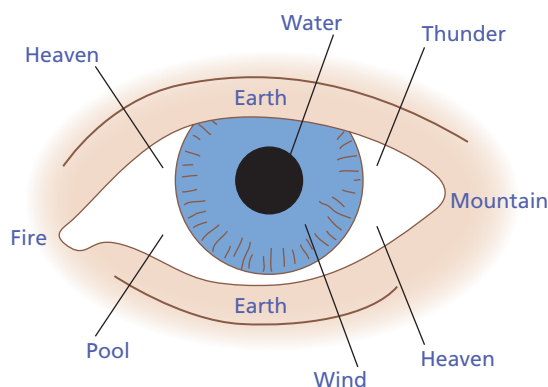


Figure 6.4. The Eight Ramparts of the eye.

the Chinese medicine system of correspondences, there are pathologies that escape such correspondences: for example, a redness of the sclera may be related to Heat in any organ and not just the Lungs.

i) The eight ramparts

The 'Eight Ramparts' are another way of classifying areas of the eye in relation to the internal organs. The classification according to the Eight Ramparts is broadly the same as that according to the Five Wheels, except that it is more detailed, especially in relation to the sclera, which is divided into three areas corresponding to Lungs, Minister Fire, and Triple Burner (Fig. 6.4).

The Eight Ramparts are as follows:

- Heaven Rampart, corresponding to the sclera and pertaining to the Lungs and Large Intestine
- Earth Rampart, corresponding to the eyelids and pertaining to the Stomach and Spleen
- Fire Rampart, corresponding to the corners of the eye and pertaining to the Heart and Small Intestine
- Water Rampart, corresponding to the pupil and pertaining to the Kidneys
- Wind Rampart, corresponding to the iris and pertaining to the Liver and Gall-Bladder
- Thunder Rampart, corresponding to the upper part of the outer sclera and pertaining to the Minister Fire
- Mountain Rampart, corresponding to the outer corner and pertaining to the Pericardium
- Pool Rampart, corresponding to the lower part of the inner sclera and pertaining to the Triple Burner

j) The eye system

Chapter 80 of the ‘Spiritual Axis’ mentions the Eye System: ‘The Essences of the five Yin and six Yang organs all reach the eyes which are the “nest” of the Essences. The Essence of the bones [and therefore of the Kidneys] manifests in the pupil; the Essence of the sinews [and therefore of the Liver] manifests in the iris; the Essence of Blood [and therefore of the Heart] manifests in the blood vessels and the canthus [of the eye]; the Essence of Qi [and therefore of the Lungs] manifests on the sclera; the Essence of the muscles [and therefore of the Spleen] manifests in the eyelids; therefore, the Essences of bones, sinews, blood and Qi together with blood vessels [or channels] form the Eye System which goes upwards entering the brain and backwards exiting at the nape of the neck. Therefore, when pathogenic factors enter the occiput due to a deficiency condition of the body, they penetrate this pathway to the Eye System into the brain. This causes the brain to feel like “turning” which causes a tightness of the Eye System; a tightness of the Eye System will cause the vision to be obfuscated and there is dizziness’.²⁸ (See Fig. 6.5.)

The Eye System, therefore, is the complex of channels, Connecting channels, and blood vessels converging at the eyes and gathering the Qi and Essence of all organs, entering the brain and then exiting at the occiput. The Eye System essentially highlights the physiological relationship between the internal organs, together with

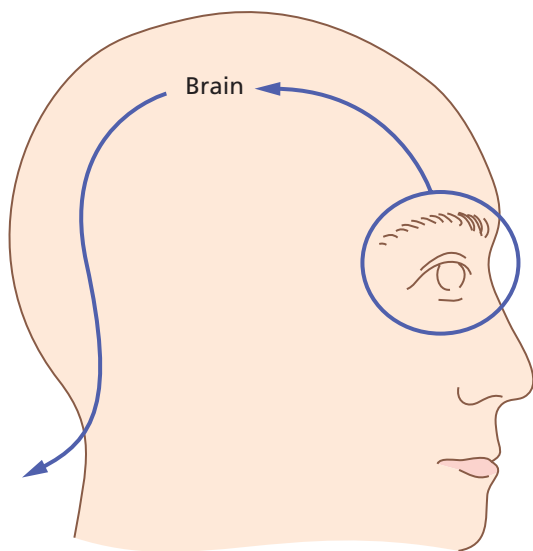


Figure 6.5. The Eye System.

their channels and blood vessels, and the eyes and brain. Modern Chinese texts often translate ‘Eye System’ as ‘optic nerve’; in my opinion, this is a reductionist view. Although the Eye System is related to the optic nerve, it is not the same structure (in the same way that channels are related to, but are not the same as, the nerves running alongside them).

From an acupuncture perspective, many of the points around the eye socket have an influence on the brain and therefore the Mind.



Remember: many of the points around the eye socket have an influence on the brain and therefore the Mind through the Eye System.

2. ASPECTS OF OBSERVATION OF THE EYES

a) The lustre of the eyes

The lustre (*shen*) of the eyes refers to the brilliance, vitality, glitter and sparkle of the eyes, all of which reflect a normal state of the Mind and Spirit and therefore, in particular, of the Heart. However, as indicated above, the Essence of the other internal organs also manifests in the eyes.

A good, normal lustre of the eyes indicates that, whatever the illness a person may be suffering from, the Mind and Spirit are still strong and that person’s emotional and mental life is balanced and well integrated.

This lustre is an extremely important sign and when present always points to a good prognosis. The normal lustre of the eyes is somewhat ‘moist’; that is, the eye looks well lubricated and not dry. However, the eye should not be too wet, either.²⁹ As soon as a new patient sits down, I study first, and carefully, the lustre of the eyes.

When the Mind and Spirit are affected by long-standing emotional problems, the eyes may lose their lustre and become somewhat dull and lacking in sparkle (Fig. 6.6). The degree of dullness of the eyes reflects the severity and duration of the emotional problems accurately: the duller the eyes, the more severe and long-standing the emotional problems. In a few cases, however, the eyes can become dull and lose lustre from physical causes, such as a serious disease, or from a long course of chemotherapy. Barring the last cause of lack of eye



Figure 6.6. Eyes without lustre.

lustre, I find this sign never to fail: even if a person tries hard to hide his or her emotional problems, lack of lustre of the eyes always tells the truth.

The 'Great Treatise of Ophthalmology' (Yan Ke Da Quan, 1644) relates the lustre of the eyes in particular to the Fire of the Gate of Life (Ming Men): *'The brightness of the Mind manifests with brilliance of the eyes. The brightness of the Mind has its origin in the Gate of Life [Ming Men] and it emerges to the Heart through the Gall-Bladder: therefore it is a manifestation of Fire'*.³⁰ Please note that the normal lustre of the eyes is somewhat 'moist'; that is, the eye looks well lubricated and not dry. However, the eye should not be too wet, either.

b) The control of the eyes

'Control' of the eyes refers to the movement or lack of movement of the eyeballs. Someone who has 'controlled' eyes is able to fix the gaze; that is, the person will be able to look directly at other people and engage their gaze – the eyes do not move too much nor are they too fixed; they look stable and at ease. Uncontrolled eyes may manifest either with a fixed stare or with a shifty glance with excessive movement of the eyeballs: a person whose eyes are uncontrolled frequently looks down or away to avoid engaging another person's gaze.

The control of the eyes is quite separate from their lustre, and one should not be surprised to see people whose eyes appear to have lustre but lack control. Lack of control of the eyes indicates obstruction of the Mind's orifices and a troubled personality.

c) The normal eye

The normal eye is characterised by clear vision, a clear white sclera with a distinct border between sclera and iris, normal lustre, normal control, a bright appearance, and normal moisture. The eyelids should not be swollen or red and should open and close normally; the inner corner should be pale-red, moist and free from ulcers, sores, or gum (a sticky secretion that collects in the corner of the eye); the eye in general should be bright and have lustre and control, indicating a good state of the Mind and Spirit; the eyeball should move normally, neither darting involuntarily nor staring fixedly; the sclera should have no spots, nebula, or visible blood vessels.

The patterns causing each of the eye signs discussed below are listed in greater detail in [Chapter 61](#).

3. OBSERVATION OF PATHOLOGICAL SIGNS OF THE EYE

1. Colour

The pathological colours of the eyes should be observed in the sclera. [Chapter 72](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' relates the five pathological colours of the sclera to the five Yin organs: *'Red eyes indicate disease of the Heart, white of the Lungs, green of the Liver, yellow of the Spleen and black of the Kidneys'*.³¹

Generally speaking, a yellow or red colour indicates Heat, whereas a greenish or pale colour indicates Cold, and a bright colour indicates disease in the Yang while a turbid colour indicates disease in the Yin.

a) Yellow

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

The most common cause of a yellow sclera is Damp-Heat: if Heat predominates, the sclera is a light and shiny-yellow, like a tangerine peel; if Dampness predominates, the sclera is a dull-yellow.

Cold-Dampness may also cause the sclera to become yellow, in which case it will be a dark and dull-yellow.

Toxic Heat may cause the sclera to become deep yellow and blood-shot. Blood deficiency may also cause the sclera to become yellow but in this case it would be a pale, light-yellow.

Blood stasis may cause the sclera to be very dark-yellow, almost brown.

YELLOW SCLERA

- Damp-Heat: bright-yellow or dark-yellow sclera, feeling of heaviness, gum in the eyes, sticky-yellow tongue coating
- Cold-Dampness: dark, dull-yellow sclera, feeling of heaviness, cold limbs, abdominal pain
- Toxic Heat: deep-yellow and blood-shot sclera, gum in the eyes, Red tongue with red points
- Blood deficiency: pale-yellow sclera, dizziness, blurred vision, Choppy pulse
- Blood stasis: dark-yellow sclera, pain in the eye, Purple tongue

b) Red

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

The red colour can be observed either in the sclera or at the corners of the eyes. A redness of the sclera indicates Heat, which may derive from any of the internal organs, but the three most common ones are Heart-Fire, Liver-Fire, and Lung-Heat.

Liver-Fire is probably the most common cause of a red sclera, in which case it may also be blood-shot and painful. Heart-Fire may also cause a red sclera and particularly in the two corners. Lung-Heat may cause a red sclera, and this is especially seen in acute conditions of Lung-Heat or Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs that occur after an invasion of Wind. Heat in the Bladder may also sometimes cause a red sclera.

Apart from the conditions of Full Heat listed above, Empty Heat may also cause the sclera to become red, in which case it would be pale-red, or it might show thin, red blood vessels.

RED SCLERA

- Liver-Fire: blood-shot sclera, pain in the eye, bitter taste, Wiry-Rapid pulse
- Heart-Fire: red corners of the eyes, pain in the eye, palpitations, Red tip of the tongue
- Lung-Heat: cough, feeling of heat
- Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs: cough with expectoration of yellow sputum, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue
- Damp-Heat in the Bladder: burning on urination, difficult urination
- Empty Heat: pale-red sclera, thin, red blood vessels, night-sweating, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating

c) Bluish-Greenish

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

Liver-Wind may cause the sclera to become greenish, whereas internal Cold may cause it to become bluish. In some cases, severe, chronic deficiency of Kidney-Yin may cause the sclera to become dull-greenish.

BLUISH-GREENISH SCLERA

- Liver-Wind: greenish sclera, giddiness, tremor, Wiry pulse
- Internal Cold: bluish sclera, cold limbs, abdominal pain, Tight pulse
- Kidney-Yin deficiency: greenish sclera, dizziness, tinnitus, Floating-Empty pulse

d) Dark

The most common cause of dark sclera is severe Full Heat, which, as indicated above, may occur in many organs but especially the Liver, Heart, and Lungs. In such cases, the dark sclera can be considered a further stage of red sclera.

Phlegm also is a common cause of dark sclera, in which case the sclera is brownish and the eye sockets may also have a brown colour underneath the eyes. A chronic, severe deficiency of Liver- and Kidney-Yin may also cause the sclera to become dark.

A dull-dark appearance of the sclera may also be due to severe deficiency and dryness of Blood.

DARK SCLERA

- Liver-Fire: pain in the eye, bitter taste, headache, Red tongue with redder sides
- Heart-Fire: pain in the eye, palpitations, anxiety, Red tongue with redder tip
- Lung-Heat: cough, feeling of heat
- Phlegm: brownish-dark sclera, dull-white specks, dark sockets, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency: dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, Floating-Empty pulse
- Deficiency and dryness of Blood: dull, dark sclera

[Table 6.1](#) summarizes the pathological colours of the sclera.

Table 6.1 Pathological eye colours

Colour	Pathology
Yellow	Dampness, Damp-Heat
Red	Full Heat (Liver, Heart, Lungs), Empty Heat
Bluish-Greenish	Liver-Wind, internal Cold
Dark	Full Heat, Phlegm, Kidney-Yin deficiency, severe deficiency and dryness of Blood

2. Other features

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

a) White specks

White specks may occur on the sclera or pupil. The most common cause of white specks is Phlegm, in which case they are often on the sclera and partially on the pupil. Severe, chronic Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency in the elderly may also cause dull-white specks on the sclera. Bright-white specks on the sclera are usually due to chronic Yang deficiency with internal Cold.

WHITE SPECKS

- Phlegm: blurred vision, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency: dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, Floating-Empty pulse
- Yang deficiency: bright-white specks, feeling cold, loose stools, Deep-Weak pulse

b) Protruding eyeball

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

One of the most common causes of protruding eyeball is disorder in the Liver channel, and this may manifest with many different Liver patterns, such as Liver-Fire, Liver-Qi stagnation with Phlegm, Liver-Wind, Liver-Wind with Phlegm-Heat, Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Qi and Blood stagnation. Fire may also cause the eyeball to protrude, and the two most common patterns are Heart-Fire and Toxic Heat.

Some Deficiency conditions may also cause the eyeball to protrude slightly, especially a Kidney deficiency or a deficiency of Qi and Blood. Finally, the eyeball may

protrude in chronic conditions of cough and asthma with rebellious Lung-Qi.

For a detailed list and description of these patterns, see Part 5 of [Chapter 61](#).

c) Sunken eyeball

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

Sunken eyeball is always due to a deficiency, which may be a chronic deficiency of Qi or a sudden deficiency of Spleen-Qi induced by food poisoning. Another cause of sunken eyeball is Collapse of Yin or Yang.

PROTRUDING EYEBALL

- Liver-Fire: red, hot and painful eye, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder sides
- Heart-Fire: red and painful eye, anxiety, insomnia, palpitations, Red tongue with redder tip
- Liver-Qi stagnation with Phlegm: feeling of distension of the eye, irritability, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Wind: giddiness, tremor, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Wind with Phlegm-Heat: giddiness, tremor, feeling of oppression of the chest, phlegm in the throat, Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse
- Liver-Qi stagnation: feeling of distension of the eye, streaming eyes, irritability, Wiry pulse
- Qi stagnation and Blood stasis: feeling of distension and pain of the eye, irritability, Purple tongue
- Toxic Heat: red sclera, gum in the eye, red and painful eye, fever, Red tongue with red points
- Deficiency of Kidney Yin and Yang: slightly protruding eyeball, dizziness, tinnitus, backache
- Qi and Blood deficiency: slightly protruding eyeball, tiredness, palpitations, poor appetite, loose stools
- Rebellious Lung-Qi: chronic cough or asthma
- Invasion of Wind-Heat: fever, aversion to cold, pain and itchiness in the eye, Floating-Rapid pulse

d) Strabismus

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

The most common cause of strabismus in children is a deficiency of Kidney-Essence. In adults, the two most common patterns of strabismus are Liver-Wind or Liver-Yang rising. Other patterns which may cause strabismus include a chronic, severe deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Liver, internal Cold, Blood stasis, Toxic Heat and Phlegm. For a detailed list and description of symptoms of these patterns, see [Chapter 61](#).

STRABISMUS

- Kidney-Essence deficiency: strabismus from early childhood
- Liver-Wind: giddiness, tremor, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Yang rising: dizziness, tinnitus, headache, Wiry pulse
- Severe deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Liver: exhaustion, blurred vision, dizziness, Choppy pulse
- Internal Cold: feeling of cold, cold limbs, Tight-Slow pulse
- Blood stasis: headache, mental restlessness, Purple tongue
- Toxic Heat: fever, gum in the eyes, Red tongue with red points
- Phlegm: dizziness, nausea, muzziness of the head, blurred vision, Swollen tongue

e) Staring, fixed eyes

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

‘Staring, fixed eyes’ describes a condition in which the eyes are wide open and the pupils are staring and not moving.

Heart-Fire and Phlegm-Heat in the Heart are the two most common patterns causing staring and fixed eyes. In both cases, this symptom always indicates a disturbance of the Mind and Spirit with obfuscation of the Mind’s orifices.

f) Abnormal colour of the eyelids

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

Both eyelids reflect the state of the Spleen; the lower eyelid also reflects the state of the Stomach. Redness and swelling of the upper eyelid indicates Spleen-Heat while redness and swelling of the lower eyelid indicates Stomach-Heat. If both eyelids are red, it usually indicates Damp-Heat in the Spleen. Redness of the eyelids with acute onset may be due to invasion of Wind-Heat. A redness inside the lower eyelid indicates Full-Heat; a thin, red line inside the lower eyelid indicates Empty Heat. A redness of the eyelids like cinnabar with small, water blisters indicates Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen. Red, itchy and hot eyelids with watery eyes are due to Wind, Heat, Dampness or Heart-Fire.

Dark eyelids indicate Kidney deficiency; greyish, dull, sooty eyelids indicate Cold-Phlegm; dark, red and swollen eyelids indicate Phlegm-Heat; dark eyelids with a dull-yellow complexion may indicate Wind-Phlegm; green eyelids indicate Stomach-Cold.

A pale colour inside the eyelids indicates either Blood or Yang deficiency while a pale colour surrounded by yellow inside the eyelids indicates retention of Food.

ABNORMAL EYELID COLOURS

- Red and swollen upper lid: Spleen-Heat
- Red and swollen lower lid: Stomach-Heat
- Both lids red: Damp-Heat in Spleen
- Red lids with acute onset: Wind-Heat
- Redness inside lower lids: Full Heat
- Thin, red line inside lower lids: Empty Heat
- Red lids like cinnabar with small water blisters: Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen
- Red, itchy and hot lids with watery eyes: Wind, Heat, Dampness or Heart-Fire
- Dark lids: Kidney deficiency
- Greyish, dull, sooty lids: Cold Phlegm
- Dark, red, swollen lids: Phlegm-Heat
- Dark lids with dull-yellow complexion: Wind-Phlegm
- Green lids: Stomach-Cold
- Pale colour inside lids: Blood or Yang deficiency
- Pale colour surrounded by yellow inside the lids: retention of Food

g) Swollen eyelids

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

A swelling of the eyelids can derive either from Heat or from Cold. When it derives from Heat it could be due to invasion of external Wind-Heat or to Spleen-Heat (as the Spleen controls the eyelids). A gradual swelling of the eyelids is usually due either to Water overflowing with oedema or to Cold-Phlegm. A description of the patterns causing swelling of the eyelid can be found in [Chapter 61](#).

SWOLLEN EYELIDS

- Red and swollen lids: Damp-Heat in Spleen
- Pale and swollen lids: Cold Dampness in Spleen
- Acute swelling of lids: Wind-Heat
- Gradual swelling of lids: Water overflowing or Cold Phlegm

h) Streaming eyes

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

There are traditionally two types of streaming eyes: one is called *liu lei* which indicates runny and streaming eyes and is described here; the other, *yan chi*, indicates a thick discharge and is described under ‘Discharge from the eyes’.

The most common cause of streaming eyes lies in the Liver channel: many different Liver patterns can cause this symptom; among them are Liver-Blood deficiency, Liver-Heat, Liver-Fire and Liver-Yin deficiency. The Heart channel also reaches the eye, and Heart-Fire may cause streaming eyes. The Kidneys control the fluids in the eyes, and a deficiency of this organ, whether of

Yin or of Yang, may also cause streaming eyes. Finally, invasions of external Wind may cause streaming eyes, with a sudden onset. For a detailed description of the patterns causing streaming eyes, see [Chapter 61](#).

STREAMING EYES

- Liver-Blood deficiency: mildly streaming eyes when exposed to wind
- Liver-Fire: profusely streaming eyes
- Liver-Yin deficiency: mildly streaming eyes in the evening
- Heart-Fire: streaming eyes when upset
- Kidney deficiency: streaming eyes, worse when tired
- External Wind: streaming eyes with sudden onset

i) Discharge from the eyes

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

'Discharge from the eyes' indicates a relatively thick, sticky discharge, different from that of streaming eyes, which is characterized by excessive tears. The most common cause of a discharge from the eyes is Heat, especially in the Liver or Heart, or Empty Heat, especially of the Liver, Heart or Lungs. Invasion of external Wind-Heat may also cause a discharge from the eyes. For a detailed description of patterns causing a discharge from the eyes, see [Chapter 61](#).

DISCHARGE FROM THE EYES

- Liver-Fire: sticky-yellow discharge
- Heart-Fire: sticky-yellow discharge, worse when upset
- Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: sticky discharge in the evening
- Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: sticky discharge in the evening
- Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: sticky discharge with cough
- Wind-Heat: sticky discharge with acute onset

j) Abnormal colours of the corners of the eyes

The inner corners of the eyes are called 'large corners' in Chinese medicine, whereas the outer corners are called 'small corners'. Many different channels reach the corners of the eyes ([Table 6.2](#)).

A redness of the corners of the eyes always indicates Heat, which may be external or internal and Full or Empty. Invasion of external Wind-Heat may cause a redness of the corners of the eyes. Full Heat of various organs can cause a redness of the corners of the eyes: Lung-Heat usually causes a redness of the inner corner,

Table 6.2 Relationship between channels and corners of the eyes

	Inner corner	Outer corner
Heart	Main channel	Main channel
Small Intestine	Main channel	Muscle channel
Gall-Bladder		Main and Muscle channels
Bladder	Main channel	
Triple Burner		Main and Muscle channels
Yin and Yang Heel Vessels	Yin and Yang Heel Vessels	

Heart-Heat a redness of the outer corner and Liver-Fire a redness of either corner.

Empty Heat deriving from Yin deficiency may cause a redness and dryness of either corner of the eye; this may be due to Yin deficiency of various organs and especially Lungs, Heart, Liver and Kidneys.

Damp-Heat may also cause a redness of either corner, usually together with a sticky-yellow discharge of the eye.

Redness starting from the inner corners of the eyes and extending towards the centre indicates a pathology of the Yin and Yang Heel vessels (Yin and Yang Qiao Mai). For a description of the patterns causing red corners of the eyes, see [Chapter 61](#).

ABNORMAL COLOUR OF THE CORNERS OF THE EYES

- Heart-Fire: redness of outer corner
- Lung-Heat: redness of inner corner
- Liver-Fire: redness of either corner
- Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: redness of inner corner in the evening
- Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: redness of outer corner in the evening
- Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: redness of either corner in the evening
- Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: redness of either corner in the evening
- Damp-Heat: redness of either corner with sticky-yellow discharge
- Redness starting from the inner corners extending towards the centre: Yin and Yang Heel

Pathology of the vessels

Pale corners of the eyes: Blood deficiency (of Liver or Heart); or Yang deficiency (of Spleen or Kidneys)

Pale corners of the eye are due to either Blood deficiency (of the Liver or Heart) or Yang deficiency (of the Spleen or Kidneys). For a description of the patterns causing pale corners of the eyes, see [Chapter 61](#).

k) Abnormal colour of the eye sockets

Dark eye sockets usually indicate Phlegm; dark-purple eye sockets indicate severe Blood stasis. A bluish colour in the lower part of the eye socket usually indicates a Kidney deficiency; a swelling of the lower part of the eye socket extending down towards the cheek indicates a pathology of the Large Intestine. A pale-greenish colour under the eyes generally indicates Liver-Qi stagnation. A dark-blue colour under the eyes indicates Cold in the Liver channel.

ABNORMAL COLOUR OF THE EYE SOCKETS

- Dark: Phlegm or Blood stasis
- Dark-purple: Blood stasis
- Bluish: Kidney deficiency
- Swelling of lower part of socket extending towards cheek: Large Intestine pathology
- Pale-greenish: Liver-Qi stagnation
- Dark-blue: Cold in Liver channel

l) Ling Shu Chapter (eye blood vessels diagnosis)

'If there are red blood vessels extending from the upper to the lower part of the sclera, it indicates Tai Yang diseases; if they extend from the lower to the upper part, it indicates Yang Ming diseases; if they extend from the lower to the medial side, it indicates Shao Yang diseases'. (See [Fig. 6.7](#).)



CHAPTER 6 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The eyes reflect the state of all the Internal Organs, and the Mind and Spirit.
- The Main, Muscle, Divergent and Connecting channels of some of the organs pass through the eyes.
- The Liver, Kidneys, Heart, Stomach, Spleen, Gall Bladder, Bladder and Small Intestine all influence the eyes.
- The various parts of the eyes may be classified in different ways according to the Five Wheels and the Eight Ramparts.
- Lustre and control of eye movement is important
- Pathological signs manifest in abnormal colour of the sclera, eyelids and eye sockets, corners of eyes, protruding and sunken eyeballs, strabismus, streaming eyes.

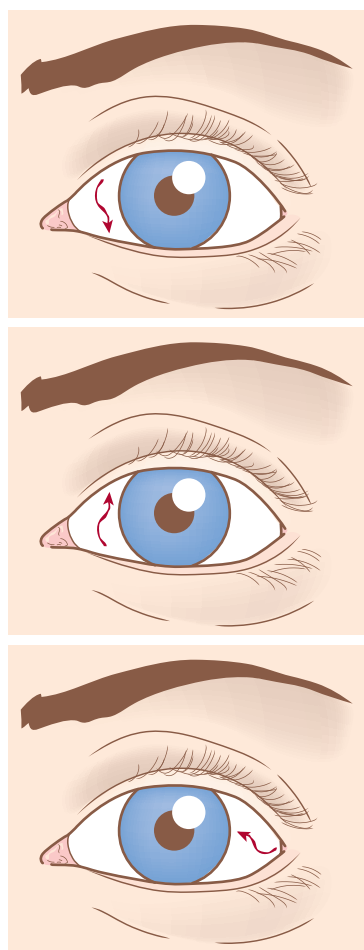


Figure 6.7. Diagnosis of blood vessels in the eyes.

END NOTES

1. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 25.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 572.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 573.
4. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 129, p. 11.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 128.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 151.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 151–2.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
10. Simple Questions p. 36.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
12. Spiritual Axis, p. 32.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
15. Simple Questions, p. 572.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 572.
17. Spiritual Axis, p. 151.

18. Ibid., p. 112.
19. Simple Question, p. 184.
20. Spiritual Axis, p. 56.
21. Ibid., p. 44.
22. Ibid., p. 35.
23. Ibid., p. 40.
24. Ibid., p. 43.
25. Ibid., p. 33.
26. Ibid., p. 56.
27. Ibid., p. 33.
28. Ibid., p. 151.
29. Eyes that are too wet (though obviously not when crying or because of a condition such as allergic rhinitis) may indicate a strong sexual desire.
30. Great Treatise of Ophthalmology (*Yan Ke Da Quan* 眼科大全 1644) cited in Ma Zhong Xue 1989 Great Treatise of Chinese Diagnostic Methods (*Zhong Guo Yi Xue Zhen Fa Da Quan* 中国医学诊法大全), Shandong Science Publishing House, p. 23.
31. Spiritual Axis, pp. 133–4.

7

Observation of the Nose

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Pale nose
 Yellow nose
 Red nose
 Bluish-greenish nose
 Reddish-purple nose
 Dark nose
 Swollen nose
 Flapping *alae nasi* (the outside of the nostrils)
 Polyps
 Dry nostrils
 Nosebleed
 Ulcers on the nose
 Papules on the nose

The nose was called in ancient China the 'Bright Hall' (*ming tang*) of the face, and it is a place where the clear Yang converges. The nose is the convergence of clear Yang for two reasons: first, because it takes in air, which is Yang in nature, and second, because the Governing Vessel ('Governor' of all Yang energies) flows through the nose. In pathological conditions in which clear Yang does not ascend to the nose, turbid Yin accumulates there, causing ailments such as chronic sinusitis or rhinitis.

Another reason the nose was called the Bright Hall in ancient times is related to Chinese face reading, according to which the nose represents the years from 41 to 49 in a person's life. Because these were considered the times when people established their career on a firm basis, the nose was compared to a hall, the most important room in a Chinese house in ancient times.

The nose is influenced primarily by the Lung channel because the Lung 'opens' into the nose and controls the sense of smell. [Chapter 37](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The nose is the sense organ of the Lungs'¹ and [chapter 17](#) says: 'Lung-Qi penetrates the nose, when the nose is harmonized it can smell'.²

[Chapter 4](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says: 'The West corresponds to the white colour and it is related to the Lungs which opens into the nose'.³ The Song dynasty doctor Chen Wu Ze said: 'The nose is the orifice of the Lungs through which we breathe and smell; Yang-Qi ascends and Yin-Qi descends in the nose so that it is the passage of Clear Qi'.⁴ It is interesting to note that the Lung channel does not actually reach the nose and it therefore influences it through the Large Intestine channel.

The pathways of the channels flowing through or around the nose are as follows:

- Both the Main and Muscle channels of the Large Intestine channel flow to the bottom of the nose (and influence the sense of smell).
- The Stomach channel connects with the nose.
- The Bladder Muscle channel reaches the bridge of the nose.
- The Governing Vessel flows downwards through the nose.

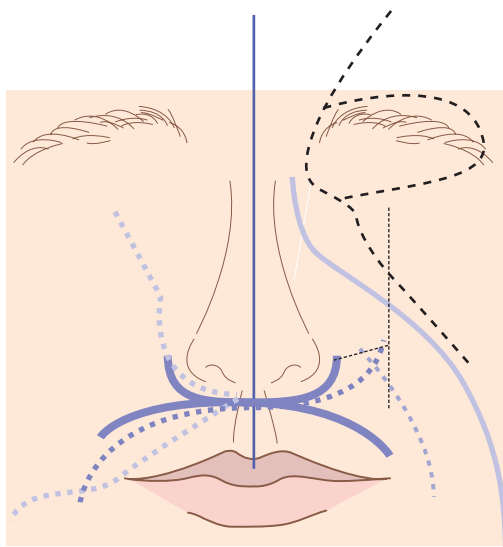
The channels flowing through or around the nose are illustrated in [Figure 7.1](#).

Through their channels, the Large Intestine and Governing Vessel influence the sense of smell and cause symptoms such as sneezing in allergic rhinitis or nasal discharge in sinusitis.

CHANNELS INFLUENCING THE NOSE

- Lung Main channel (although it does not go to the nose)
- Governing Vessel
- Large Intestine Main and Muscle channels
- Stomach Main channel
- Bladder Muscle channel

Apart from the relationship between the nose and these channels, the shape and colour of the nose have particular diagnostic significance in facial diagnosis. In fact, pathological colours of the nose may reflect pathology of other organs such as the Liver and Spleen. [Chapter 37](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Bright Hall [nose] can have five [pathological] colours reflecting the Qi of the



- Governing Vessel
- Large Intestine Main Channel
- Stomach Main Channel
- - - - Bladder Muscle Channel
- BL-Muscle
- L.I. Muscle
- ST-Main
- L.I. Main

Figure 7.1. Channels coursing through the nose.

five Yin organs'.⁵ Different parts of the nose are related to different organs, which are illustrated in [Figure 7.2](#).

[Chapter 19](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The bone of the Bright Hall [bridge of the nose] should be high, even and straight; the state of the five Yin organs can be determined from the centre of the nose, while the state of the six Yang organs from the sides'.⁶

The patterns causing each of the nose signs discussed below are listed in greater detail in Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#).

The following nose signs will be discussed:

1. Pale nose
2. Yellow nose
3. Red nose
4. Bluish-greenish nose
5. Reddish-purple nose
6. Dark nose

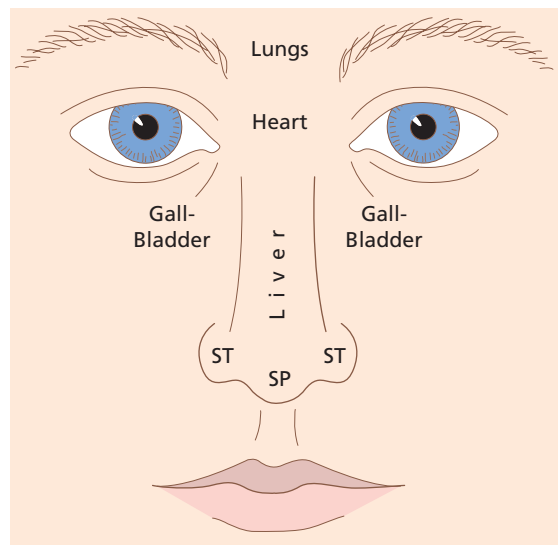


Figure 7.2. Organs reflected on nose.

7. Swollen nose
8. Flapping *alae nasi* (the outside of the nostrils)
9. Polyps
10. Dry nostrils
11. Nosebleed
12. Ulcers on the nose
13. Papules on the nose

1. PALE NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

A pale nose may indicate Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Empty Cold; in such cases the pallor is primarily at the tip.

Blood deficiency (usually of the Liver) may cause the bridge of the nose to become pale. Among the Full conditions Phlegm-Fluids may cause the tip of the nose to become pale and swollen. A white and very dry nose indicates severe Lung-Qi deficiency.

PALE NOSE

- Pale tip: Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Empty Cold
- Pale bridge: Liver-Blood deficiency
- Pale and swollen tip: Phlegm-Fluids
- Pale and dry: Lung-Qi deficiency

2. YELLOW NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

The yellowness ranges from a fresh, bright-yellow to a dull-yellow. If the yellowness is caused by Damp-Heat (usually in the Spleen), it will be bright if Heat predominates and dull if Dampness predominates.

A chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency with retention of Dampness is a common cause of a dull-yellow colour, usually at the tip of the nose. Spleen-Qi deficiency with Phlegm may cause the nose to become yellow and dry.

Liver-Blood stasis may cause a dull, dark-yellow on the bridge of the nose. Spleen-Heat causes the tip of the nose to become bright-yellow and dry. Finally, Phlegm-Fluids may cause the tip of the nose to become yellow and swollen.

YELLOW NOSE

- Bright-yellow: Damp-Heat in Spleen with predominance of Heat
- Dull-yellow: Damp-Heat in Spleen with predominance of Dampness
- Yellow and dry: Phlegm with Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Dull, dark-yellow: Liver-Blood stasis
- Bright-yellow and dry tip: Spleen-Heat
- Yellow and swollen tip: Phlegm-Fluids



TREATMENT NOTE

For Dampness in the nose: LI-4 Hegu, Bitong, Du-23
Shangxing, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-43 Xiangu.

3. RED NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

Lung-Heat may cause a redness of the nose, especially on the upper part of the bridge. Liver-Fire is a common cause of redness of the central part of the bridge. Full or Empty Heat of the Spleen may cause a redness of the tip of the nose. Finally, the bridge of the nose may become red in invasions of Wind-Heat.

RED NOSE

- Red in upper part: Lung-Heat
- Red in central part: Liver-Fire
- Red tip: Spleen-Heat or Empty Heat
- Red bridge with acute onset: Wind-Heat



TREATMENT NOTE

Lung-Heat in the nose: LU-7 Lieque, LI-4 Hegu.



TREATMENT NOTE

Liver-Fire in the nose: LIV-2 Xingjian, LU-7 Lieque.

4. BLuish-GREENISH NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

Liver-Blood stasis may cause the nose bridge to become greenish, whereas Phlegm-Fluids may turn the nose tip bluish. Internal Cold may cause the bridge of the nose to become bluish.

5. REDDISH-PURPLE NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

A reddish-purple nose always indicates Blood stasis occurring against a background of Heat. Blood stasis may occur in the Liver, in which case the bridge of the nose would be reddish-purple; in the Heart, in which case the area of the bridge between the eyes is reddish-purple; or in the Stomach, in which case the *alae nasi* (the outside of the nostrils) become reddish-purple.

REDDISH-PURPLE NOSE

- Reddish-purple bridge: Liver-Blood
- Reddish-purple in upper bridge between eyes: Heart-Blood stasis
- Reddish-purple nostrils: Blood stasis in Stomach

6. DARK NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

A dark nose may be very dark, bluish-purple, or may reach the point of being dull-black. Dull-blackness may indicate extreme Heat and a dark bluish-purple extreme deficiency, especially of the Kidneys. A dark and dry nose indicates Kidney-Yin deficiency, often deriving from excessive sexual activity. A dark-yellowish nose suggests Blood stasis. A dark nose appearing in a woman after

childbirth may indicate a severe deficiency of Lungs and Stomach.

DARK NOSE

- Dull-black: extreme Heat (usually of Liver)
- Dark-bluish-purple: extreme Deficiency
- Dark and dry: Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Dark-yellowish: Blood stasis
- Dark nose in woman after childbirth: severe deficiency of Lungs and Stomach

7. SWOLLEN NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

The nose can become swollen from Damp-Heat, Phlegm, or Heat; the latter may derive from the Lungs, Heart, or Liver. If the nose is swollen from Heat, it will also be red, whereas if it is swollen from Phlegm, it will be greasy. Empty Heat of the Heart or Kidneys may also cause the nose to swell.

8. FLAPPING ALAE NASI (THE OUTSIDE OF THE NOSTRILS)

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

The most common cause of flapping *alae nasi* is Lung-Heat in acute conditions. It may also appear in Lung Empty Heat and in external invasions of Wind-Heat.

9. POLYPS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Polyps in the nose are caused either by Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen or by Phlegm affecting the Lungs. Polyps caused by Damp-Heat are frequently seen in chronic sinusitis.



TREATMENT NOTE

Dampness in Stomach and Spleen: Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-43 Xiangqu, L.I.-11 Quchi.
Phlegm in Lungs: Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, BL-13 Feishu.

10. DRY NOSTRILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

Dry nostrils can be caused either by Heat or Empty Heat, usually affecting the Lung or Stomach channel. In acute febrile diseases, dry nostrils may be caused by Toxic Heat, and in the beginning stages of respiratory infections, they are caused by invasions of Wind-Heat.

11. NOSEBLEED

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

The two main causes of nosebleed, as in other forms of bleeding, are Heat agitating the Blood or deficient Qi unable to hold Blood. In the case of nosebleed, the organs most frequently involved are Liver, Stomach and Lungs (with patterns of Heat) or the Spleen (deficient Spleen-Qi not holding Blood). Acute nosebleed may be caused by invasion of Wind-Heat.

12. ULCERS ON THE NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

Ulcers on the nose are usually due either to Lung-Heat or to Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen.

13. PAPULES ON THE NOSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

Red papules on the nose may indicate Stomach-Heat, Lung-Heat, or, if they are dark, Blood-Heat in the Lungs.



CHAPTER 7 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The channels that influence the nose.
- That abnormal colours of specific areas of the nose indicate various pathologies of the Yin organs, the Stomach, Body Fluids, Qi and Blood.
- The causes of nosebleeds, flapping *alae nasi*, dry nostrils, lumps inside or outside the nose.

END NOTES

1. 1981 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine: Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 78.
2. Ibid., p. 50.
3. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 27.
4. Cited in Ma Zhong Xue 1989, Great Treatise of Chinese Diagnostic Methods (*Zhong Guo Yi Xue Zhen Fa Da Quan* 中国医学诊法大全), Shandong Science Publishing House, p. 56.
5. Spiritual Axis, p. 78.
6. Ibid., p. 96.

Observation of the Lips, Mouth, Palate, Teeth, Gums and Philtrum

8

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Lips

Pale lips
Red lips
Purple lips
Bluish-greenish lips
Yellow lips
Dry or cracked lips
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Inverted lips
Drooping lips
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Cracked corners of the mouth
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Mouth open
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Dribbling from the corners of the mouth

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Yellow and dry teeth
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Bleeding gums
Receding gums
Gums oozing pus
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Flat philtrum
Stiff-looking philtrum
Pale philtrum
Red philtrum
Bluish-greenish philtrum (qing)
Dark philtrum

From a Five-Element perspective, the mouth and lips are the orifice of the Spleen, but they are related to many other channels. The Spleen channel is closely related to both the mouth and the lips. [Chapter 5](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says: *'The Spleen controls the mouth'*.¹

[Chapter 4](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says: 'The centre pertains to the yellow colour, it connects with the Spleen which opens into the mouth'.² [Chapter 17](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'Spleen-Qi penetrates within the mouth, when the Spleen is harmonized, the mouth can taste the five flavours'*.³ [Chapter 37](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'The mouth and lips are the orifice of the Spleen'*.⁴

[Chapter 47](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'When the lips are full, the Spleen is strong; when the lips are withered, the Spleen is weak; when the lips are hard, the Spleen has a Full condition; when the lips are large but soft, the Spleen is depleted. When both lips are in a good condition the Spleen is healthy; when the lips are deviated upwards, the Spleen is severely depleted'*.⁵

The Stomach channel, of course, is closely connected to the mouth because its Main and Muscle channels both flow around the mouth. [Chapter 40](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'The clear Qi of the Stomach ascends to the mouth'*.⁶ The Large Intestine channel also flows to the lower part of the nose, and its muscle channels bind to the side of the nose.

The mouth and lips are therefore influenced primarily by the Spleen, Stomach and Large Intestine channels; however, the Liver channel also wraps around the lips and

so do the Penetrating and Directing Vessels. Chapter 10 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Liver channel flows around the inside of the lips'.⁷ The Governing Vessel penetrates through the upper lip and the upper gum. Internally, other channels flow to the inside of the mouth and the tongue and, in particular, the Heart Connecting channel and the Kidney Main and Divergent channels.

As the Heart houses the Mind, it controls all the senses and therefore also the mouth and taste.

The saliva is mostly under the control of the Stomach, Spleen, and Kidneys, and a normal level of moisture in the mouth indicates a normal state of the Body Fluids.

The channels flowing to or around the mouth are illustrated in Fig. 8.1.

CHANNELS INFLUENCING THE MOUTH AND LIPS

- Spleen
- Stomach Main and Muscle channels
- Large Intestine
- Liver
- Penetrating Vessel
- Directing Vessel
- Heart Connecting channel
- Kidney Main and Divergent channels
- Governing Vessel

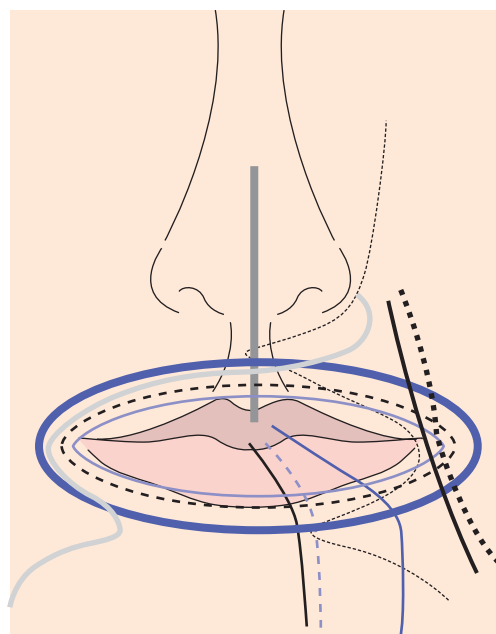
Observation of the lips, mouth, palate, teeth, gums, and philtrum will be discussed under the following headings:

1. Lips
2. Mouth
3. Palate
4. Teeth
5. Gums
6. Philtrum

1. LIPS

The following lip signs will be discussed:

- a) Pale lips
- b) Red lips
- c) Purple lips
- d) Bluish-greenish lips
- e) Yellow lips
- f) Dry or cracked lips
- g) Peeled lips
- h) Swollen lips
- i) Trembling lips



- Large Intestine Main Channel
- Stomach Main Channel
- Heart Connecting Channel (to tongue)
- - - Kidney Main Channel (to tongue)
- Kidney Divergent Channel (to tongue)
- Governing Vessel
- Liver Main Channel
- - - Directing Vessel
- Penetrating Vessel
- ST-Muscle
- ST-Main

Figure 8.1. Channels flowing around the mouth.

- j) Inverted lips
- k) Drooping lips
- l) Abnormal lip colour in pregnancy

The colour of the lips primarily reflects the state of the Spleen, Heart, and Liver. It also reflects conditions of Blood deficiency, Yang deficiency, and Heat and Blood stasis. The normal lips, like the complexion, should be pale-red and slightly moist, not swollen, not withered,

not contracted, and not quivering. The normal, pale-red colour of the lips reflects the normal condition of Qi and Blood; their moistness reflects the normal condition of Body Fluids; and their normal movement reflects a normal condition of the Mind and Spirit.

The patterns causing each of the lip signs discussed below are listed in greater detail in Part 5, [Chapter 60](#).

a) Pale lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

When the lips are paler than the normal pale-red, they indicate either Blood or Yang deficiency of the Spleen or Liver. In cases of Blood deficiency, especially of the Liver, they might also be slightly dry, whereas in cases of Yang deficiency they are usually moist. Pale-greyish lips the colour of paper indicate severe Blood deficiency. For a more detailed description of the patterns involved, see [Chapter 60](#).

b) Red lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Red lips are always caused by Heat, which can be Full or Empty and acute or chronic. Full Heat of most organs, and especially Lungs, Heat, Stomach, Liver, Kidneys and Spleen, may cause the lips to be red and swollen; Empty Heat of the same organs may cause the lips to be red and dry.

Acute invasions of Wind-Heat may also cause the lips to become bright red, but this happens mostly in children; at the Qi level of acute febrile diseases, the lips also become bright red, and they are also cracked and dry in cases of Fire. For a more detailed description of the patterns involved, see [Chapter 60](#).

c) Purple lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Purple lips may reflect Blood stasis, in which case they tend to be reddish-purple, or Cold (which may be Full or Empty), in which case they tend to be bluish-purple. Bluish-purple and dark lips indicate extreme Cold. Long-standing retention of Phlegm in the Lungs often leads to Blood stasis, and this may also cause the lips to be bluish-purple. Finally, the lips may become reddish-purple at the Nutritive-Qi or Blood levels in acute febrile diseases. For a more detailed description of the patterns involved, see [Chapter 60](#).

d) Bluish-greenish lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

'Bluish-green' is a translation of the Chinese word *qing*. The colour *qing* may be either bluish or greenish, depending on the pattern involved. The lips may become bluish in case of Cold, which may be Full or Empty, and greenish in case of Blood stasis, which may affect Heart, Lungs, Stomach, or Liver. For a more detailed description of the patterns involved, see [Chapter 60](#).

e) Yellow lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Yellow lips are usually caused by Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen, which may be associated with Heat or Cold; another possible cause of yellow lips is Full-Heat with Blood stasis. For a more detailed description of the patterns involved, see [Chapter 60](#).

f) Dry or cracked lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common causes of dry lips are Stomach- and Spleen-Yin deficiency or Liver-Blood deficiency. Full Heat or Empty Heat may also cause the lips to become dry and cracked. Severe, long-standing Blood stasis may lead to the same effect because stagnant Blood prevents the proper generation and movement of Body Fluids. In acute cases, invasion of Wind-Heat can cause dry lips.

If the upper lip is dry, it indicates Lung-Heat or Heat in the Large Intestine. If the lower lip is dry, it indicates Heat in the Stomach. If the lips are dry but red, the condition is not severe and the prognosis is good. If they are dry but dark, the condition is more serious and the prognosis less good. For a more detailed description of the patterns involved, see [Chapter 60](#).

DRY OR CRACKED LIPS

- Spleen-Yin deficiency: dry and slightly red
- Liver-Blood deficiency: dry and pale
- Full Heat (of Stomach and Spleen): dry, cracked, and red
- Empty Heat (of Stomach and Spleen): dry and slightly red
- Blood stasis: dry and purple
- Wind-Heat: dry with acute onset
- Dry upper lip: Heat in Lungs or Large Intestine
- Dry lower lip: Stomach-Heat
- Dry and red: prognosis good
- Dry and dark: prognosis not good

g) Peeled lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

'Peeled lips' refers to lips that are peeled, fresh red, cracked and swollen. The causes of this are either Spleen-Heat or Spleen-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat.

h) Swollen lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A swelling of the lips always indicates Heat, usually either Damp-Heat or Toxic Heat affecting the Stomach and Spleen. An acute swelling of the lips may also be due to an allergic reaction. For a more detailed description of the patterns causing swollen lips, refer to [Chapter 60](#).

i) Trembling lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common cause of trembling lips is Spleen-Qi deficiency. It may also be caused by Blood deficiency with Empty Wind or Stomach-Fire.

j) Inverted lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Inverted lips may be caused either by a severe Yang or a severe Yin deficiency. In the course of a serious disease, contracted lips that do not cover the teeth, with a short philtrum, indicate collapse of Spleen-Yin.

k) Drooping lips

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Drooping lips may be caused either by sinking of Spleen-Qi or deficiency of Spleen-Yang and Kidney-Yang.

l) Abnormal lip colour in pregnancy

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Florid, red, and full lips indicate a good state of the Penetrating Vessel and an easy childbirth. Pale lips in pregnancy indicate Blood deficiency and possibly a difficult childbirth. A white colour and dryness of the corners of the mouth indicate severe Blood deficiency and also the possibility of a difficult birth. Bluish lips in pregnancy indicate Blood stasis from Cold and are always considered to be a dangerous sign. A bluish face and

dark lips or a dark face and bluish lips in pregnancy also signal danger.

2. MOUTH

The patterns causing each of the mouth signs discussed below are listed in greater detail in Part 5, [Chapter 60](#).

The following mouth signs will be discussed:

- Cold sores
- Cracked corners of the mouth
- Mouth ulcers
- Mouth open
- Deviation of mouth
- Dribbling from the corners of the mouth

a) Cold sores

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

A sudden attack of cold sores at the corner of the mouth or on the edge of the upper lip may be due to an external invasion of Wind-Heat. Chronic or recurrent cold sores at the corner of the mouth or on the edge of the lower lip may be caused by a Stomach pathology, either Damp-Heat, Heat or Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. Heat or Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine may also cause cold sores, which in this case would be on the upper lip.



TREATMENT NOTE

Cold sores: LI-4 Hegu, ST-44 Neiting, ST-4 Dicang.

b) Cracked corners of the mouth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Cracked and dry corners of the mouth are due either to Stomach-Heat or to Stomach-Yin deficiency with or without Empty Heat.

c) Mouth ulcers

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

The most common causes of mouth ulcers are Stomach-Heat, which causes the ulcers to have a red rim and to appear on the gums or inside the cheeks, and Heart-Fire, which causes the ulcers to appear on the tip of the tongue. Mouth ulcers may also derive from a deficiency

either of Yin (normally accompanied by some Empty Heat) or of Stomach-Qi and Spleen-Qi.

In addition, mouth ulcers may be caused by Yin Fire, which is characterized by some Heat above and a deficiency of the Original (Yuan) Qi.

A sudden attack of ulcers inside the cheeks may accompany an external invasion of Wind-Heat.



TREATMENT NOTE

Stomach-Heat: ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.
Heart-Fire: HE-8 Shaofu, L.I.-Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.
Stomach Empty Heat: L.I.-Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-44 Neiting, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.
Yin Fire: L.I.-Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-44 Neiting, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

d) Mouth open

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

‘Mouth open’ means that the person keeps the mouth open all the time. The most common cause of the mouth being wide open is deficiency of Lung-Qi with retention of Phlegm in the Lungs. Patients suffering from asthma often have their mouth open as they struggle to breathe, and this itself usually indicates Lung-Qi deficiency and Phlegm in the Lungs.

The mouth could also be slightly open from Heart-Heat, and in this case usually reflects emotional problems.

e) Deviation of the mouth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

There are two basic causes of deviation of the mouth: one due to internal Liver-Wind, the other due to invasion of external Wind in the channels of the face. From a Western perspective, the former usually corresponds to central paralysis (which is caused by a lesion of the central nervous system); the latter is called *peripheral paralysis* and is caused by a lesion of the peripheral nerves ([Fig. 8.2](#)).

In some cases deviation of the mouth may be caused by Liver-Qi stagnation, in which case it is not a permanent deviation but one that comes and goes according to the emotional state. A general deficiency of Qi and Blood may cause a slight deviation of the mouth. Finally, Toxic Heat affecting the Lesser-Yang and Bright-Yang channels of the face may also cause deviation of the mouth.



Figure 8.2. Deviation of the mouth.

f) Dribbling from the corners of the mouth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Dribbling from the corners of the mouth may be caused by Qi deficiency of the Spleen and/or Lungs, usually with Empty Cold. In the elderly, internal Wind, often combined with Phlegm, is a common cause of dribbling from the corners of the mouth, and this symptom is frequently seen after an attack of Wind-Stroke. An invasion of external Wind in the channels of the face (the same pathology as in facial paralysis) may also cause dribbling from the corners of the mouth.

Heat in the Stomach and Spleen may also cause dribbling from the corners of the mouth.

3. PALATE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The normal palate should be pale-red, bright and moist. It can be divided into five areas, each corresponding to one of the Yin organs ([Fig. 8.3](#)).

The following palate signs will be discussed:

- Pale palate
- Dull-pale palate
- Yellow palate

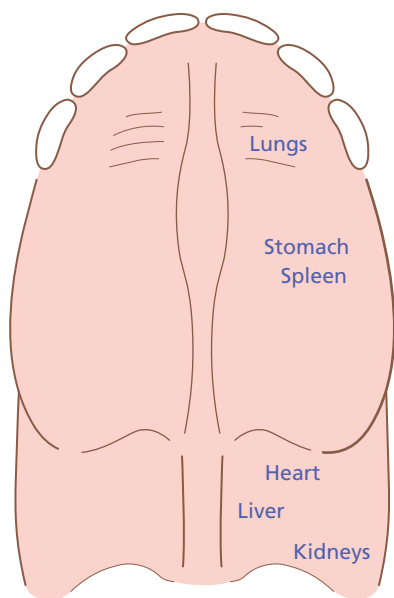


Figure 8.3. Areas of the palate corresponding to the Yin organs.

- d) Red palate
- e) Purple palate

The patterns causing each of the palate signs discussed below are listed in greater detail in Part 5, [Chapter 60](#).

a) Pale palate

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

This describes a palate that is too pale and looks like the skin of milk: it indicates deficiency of Stomach and Spleen.

b) Dull-pale palate

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A dull-pale palate indicates Blood deficiency or Qi and Blood deficiency.

c) Yellow palate

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A yellow palate indicates a pathology of the Stomach and Spleen and in particular an Empty pathology if it is dull-yellow and a Full pathology (such as Damp-Heat) if it is bright-yellow.

d) Red palate

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A red palate indicates Full Heat, which may derive from any organ, but in particular the Stomach, Lungs, and Liver.

e) Purple palate

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A purple palate indicates Blood stasis.

4. TEETH

The teeth and gums are closely related to the Stomach, Large Intestine, and Kidneys. [Chapter 63](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The teeth are at the end of the Stomach channel'.⁸ [Chapter 10](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Stomach channel...enters the region of the upper teeth'.⁹ The same chapter also says: 'The Large Intestine channel...enters the region of the lower teeth'.¹⁰ The Governing Vessel also influences the upper and lower gums in the midline of the body. The Kidney organ and channel specifically influence the teeth because the teeth are considered to be an extension of the bones.

[Chapter 1](#) of the 'Simple Questions,' describing the 7- and 8-year cycles of women and men, clearly relates the development and decay of bones to the flourishing and decline of Kidney-Qi: 'When a girl is 7 years old, Kidney-Qi is flourishing and the teeth grow...when she is 21 Kidney-Qi is at its peak and the second teeth are fully grown...when a boy is 8 years old, Kidney-Qi is flourishing and the teeth grow...when he is 24 Kidney-Qi is at its peak and the second teeth are fully grown...when he is 64 the teeth fall out'.¹¹ The gums are also influenced by the Kidneys.

CHANNELS INFLUENCING THE TEETH AND GUMS

- Stomach (gums)
- Large Intestine (gums)
- Kidneys (teeth and gums)
- Governing Vessel (teeth and gums)

The following teeth signs will be discussed:

- a) Tooth cavities
- b) Loose teeth
- c) Plaque
- d) Dry and white teeth

- e) Dry and dull teeth
- f) Yellow and dry teeth
- g) Grey teeth
- h) Upper teeth moist and lower teeth dry

The patterns causing each of the teeth and gum signs discussed below are listed in greater detail in Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#).

a) Tooth cavities

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

From the Chinese perspective, cavities may be caused by Damp-Heat in the Stomach channel, by Stomach-Qi and Spleen-Qi deficiency, and by a Kidney deficiency.

b) Loose teeth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Again, from the Chinese perspective, teeth may become loose either from Heat or Empty-Heat of the Stomach and/or Large Intestine or from a Kidney deficiency (which may be of Yin or Yang). Stomach-Heat and Empty Heat of the Spleen or Kidneys may all cause loose teeth.

c) Plaque

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common causes of plaque are Stomach-Heat or Heat in the Kidneys and Stomach. Another possible cause is Kidney-Yin deficiency.

d) Dry and white teeth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

'White' here indicates teeth that are bright-white and dry. The most common cause of white, dry teeth is either external Heat that injures the Body Fluids, or Stomach-Heat.

e) Dry and dull teeth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

'Dry and dull teeth' indicates teeth that are white but dull and very dry, like old bones that have been exposed to the sun for a long time. The most common cause of dry and dull teeth is a Kidney-Yin deficiency with or without Empty Heat: in the case of Empty Heat, the teeth will be particularly dry. Another possible cause is Blood deficiency.

f) Yellow and dry teeth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common cause of 'yellow and dry teeth' is Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen, with a predominance of Heat. Another possible cause of yellow and dry teeth is a long-standing Kidney-Yin deficiency. In a few cases, it may be due to long-standing accumulation of Cold: this happens when the accumulation of Cold in the abdomen impairs the circulation of Yang-Qi in the Greater-Yang and Bright-Yang channels, resulting in the accumulation of Yang energy in the top part of these channels and in the Governing Vessel over the teeth.

g) Grey teeth

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common cause of grey teeth is Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. Greyish teeth the colour of ash indicate Stomach- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with turbid Dampness.

h) Upper teeth moist and lower teeth dry

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

When the upper teeth are moist and the lower teeth dry, it indicates Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat in the Heart.

5. GUMS

The following gum signs will be discussed:

- a) Inflamed gums
- b) Bleeding gums
- c) Receding gums
- d) Gums oozing pus
- e) Pale gums
- f) Red gums
- g) Purple gums

The patterns causing each of the gum signs discussed below are listed in greater detail in Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#).

a) Inflamed gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common cause of inflamed gums is Heat or Empty Heat in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine. Yin Fire may also cause inflamed gums.

b) Bleeding gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Deficient Spleen-Qi not holding blood is the most common cause of chronic bleeding gums. Stomach-Fire is also a common cause of bleeding gums, in which case the gums would be red and swollen, and this symptom by itself allows us to differentiate Stomach-Fire from Stomach-Heat. Empty Heat in the Stomach or Kidneys may also cause bleeding gums. Finally, Yin Fire may also cause bleeding gums.



TREATMENT NOTE

Spleen-Qi deficiency: SP-3 Taibai, ST-36 Zusanli, LI-4 Hegu, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-12 Zhongwan.
 Stomach-Fire: LI-4 Hegu, ST-44 Neiting, LI-11 Quchi.
 Stomach Empty Heat: LI-4 Hegu, ST-44 Neiting, Ren-12 Zhongwan.
 Kidney Empty Heat: LI-4 Hegu, KI-3 Taixi, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.
 Yin Fire: LI-4 Hegu, ST-44 Neiting, LI-11 Quchi, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

c) Receding gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common cause of receding gums is Qi and Blood deficiency. Receding gums may also be caused by Stomach-Fire or Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat.

d) Gums oozing pus

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common cause of gums oozing pus is Stomach-Fire, but in chronic conditions it may be caused by a severe deficiency of Qi and Blood.

e) Pale gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Pale gums may reflect a Spleen-Qi deficiency, a Blood deficiency, or a Spleen-Yang deficiency with Empty Cold.

f) Red gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Red gums reflect Heat or Empty Heat in the Stomach or Spleen. If they are also swollen and painful, this indicates Stomach-Fire. Slightly red gums, without swelling, and loose teeth that are painful in the afternoon indicate Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat.

g) Purple gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The most common cause of purple gums is Blood stasis in the Stomach.

6. PHILTRUM

The philtrum is the area between the bottom of the nose and the upper lip, defined by the two vertical ridges ([Fig. 8.4](#)).

The philtrum area is influenced by the Large Intestine channel and by the Governing Vessel. In facial diagnosis, it reflects the state of the Bladder and Uterus. The philtrum should be well defined by the two vertical ridges and well proportioned; that is, not too long or too short. In face reading, the shape and appearance of the philtrum is related to fertility in women: a shallow philtrum with poorly defined vertical ridges or a very short philtrum indicates either infertility or difficulty in conceiving ([Fig. 8.5](#)).

In observing the philtrum, one should note its shape and its colour. In terms of shape, the philtrum may be too flat and undefined or too pronounced, with stiff-looking ridges. The pathological colours of the philtrum include pale, red, bluish-greenish or dark.

The following philtrum signs will be discussed:

- Flat philtrum
- Stiff-looking philtrum

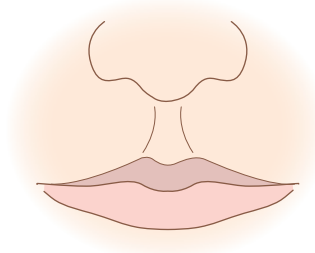


Figure 8.4. The philtrum.

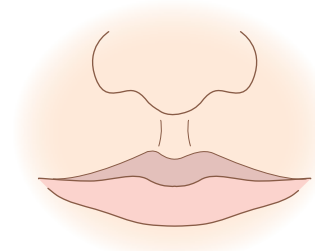


Figure 8.5. Philtrum indicating possible infertility.

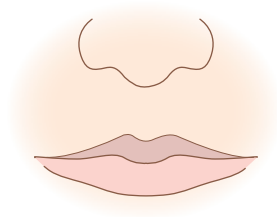


Figure 8.6. Flat philtrum.

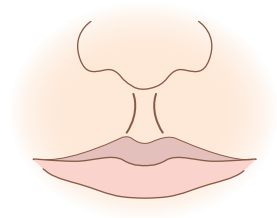


Figure 8.7. Stiff-looking philtrum.

- c) Pale philtrum
- d) Red philtrum
- e) Bluish-greenish philtrum
- f) Dark philtrum

The patterns causing each of the philtrum signs listed below are discussed in more detail in [Chapter 60](#).

a) Flat philtrum

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The flat philtrum is poorly defined, and the vertical ridges are not pronounced. The most common significance of a flat philtrum is a Kidney deficiency. It may also indicate Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen ([Fig. 8.6](#)).

b) Stiff-looking philtrum

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

The stiff-looking philtrum is pronounced, its vertical ridges are overly defined, and the upper lip curls up slightly ([Fig. 8.7](#)).

A stiff-looking philtrum generally indicates Blood stasis.

c) Pale philtrum

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A pale philtrum indicates either Qi deficiency or Cold, which may be the Full or Empty type.

d) Red philtrum

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A red philtrum indicates either Blood-Heat, often in the Uterus, or, in acute cases, external invasion of Wind-Heat.

e) Bluish-greenish philtrum (qing)

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A bluish philtrum indicates internal Cold, whereas a greenish philtrum indicates a Liver pattern, often stagnation of Liver-Qi.

f) Dark philtrum

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

A dark philtrum indicates chronic Blood-Heat or Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner.



CHAPTER 8 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The channels influencing the mouth and lips.
- Lip pathologies based on colour, size, movement, and orientation of the lips.
- Mouth pathologies indicated by the appearance of the mouth.
- The channels influencing the teeth and gums.
- The significance of palate and teeth colour, gum disorders, and appearance of the philtrum.

END NOTES

1. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 39.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
3. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 50.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 91.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 35–6.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
11. Simple Questions, pp. 5–6.

9

Observation of the Ears

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Large ears
 Small ears
 Swollen ears
 Contracted ears
 Dry and contracted helix
 Sores on the ear
 Warts on the ear
 Yellow helix
 Pale helix
 Bluish-greenish (qing) helix
 Dark helix
 Red helix
 Red back of the ear
 Distended blood vessels on the ear
 Excessive wax production
 Swelling and redness of the concha
 Discharge from the ears

The ears are related to the Kidneys. [Chapter 17](#) of the ‘Spiritual Axis’ says: ‘Kidney-Qi opens into the ears, when the Kidneys are harmonized the ears can detect the five sounds’.¹ [Chapter 5](#) of the ‘Simple Questions’ says: ‘The Kidneys govern the ears’.² [Chapter 37](#) of the ‘Spiritual Axis’ says: ‘The ears are the sense organ of the Kidneys’.³

Although the relationship between the ears and the Kidneys is very strong, other organs also influence the ears. For example, the Heart has an influence on the physiology and pathology of the ear. [Chapter 4](#) of the ‘Simple Questions’ says: ‘The South corresponds to the colour red and to the Heart which opens into the ear’.⁴

All the Yang channels reach or enter the ears. Both Lesser-Yang channels (i.e., Gall-Bladder and Triple Burner) have a strong influence on the ear also, the former circling around the ear and the latter entering the ear. These two channels are particularly involved

in acute ear pathologies characterized by either Wind-Heat or Damp-Heat affecting the ears.

The Small Intestine channel intersects with the Gall-Bladder channel in the region of the ear and enters the ear at S.I.-19 Tinggong. The Bladder channel also intersects with the Gall-Bladder channel in the region of the ear. The internal pathway of the Stomach channel also reaches the ear, whereas the muscle channel of the Large Intestine travels to the front of the ear.

The pathways of the channels flowing to the ears are illustrated in [Fig. 9.1](#).

CHANNELS INFLUENCING THE EAR

- Gall-Bladder
- Triple Burner
- Small Intestine
- Bladder
- Stomach
- Large Intestine Muscle channel



Remember: the ear is influenced not only by the Kidney channel.

The normal ear should be, first of all, proportionate in size to the head, it should be relatively moist, its flesh should be full but supple, and the helix should be pale-red and moist. For a more detailed description of the patterns appearing in symptoms and signs related to the ears, see [Chapter 57](#), Part 5, Symptoms and Signs.

The following ear signs will be discussed:

1. Large ears
2. Small ears
3. Swollen ears
4. Contracted ears
5. Dry and contracted helix
6. Sores on the ear
7. Warts on the ear

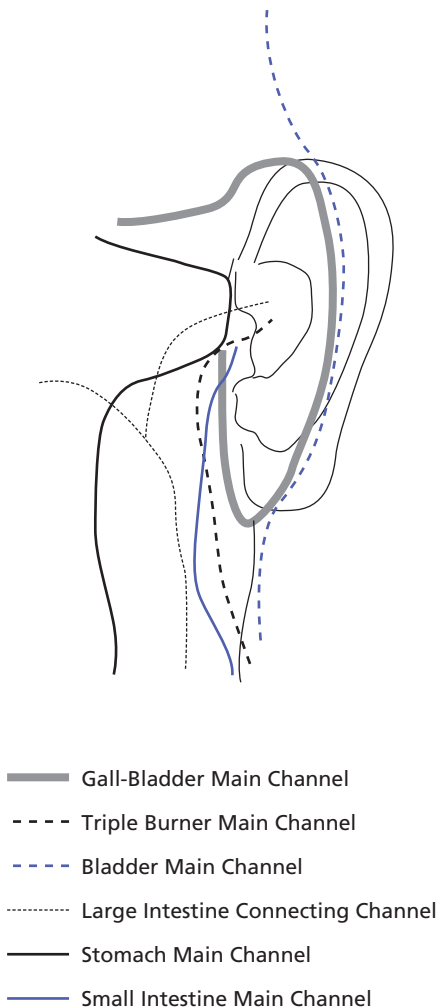


Figure 9.1. Channels flowing to the ears.

8. Yellow helix
9. Pale helix
10. Bluish-greenish helix
11. Dark helix
12. Red helix
13. Red back of the ear
14. Distended blood vessels on the ear
15. Excessive wax production
16. Swelling and redness of the concha
17. Discharge from the ears

Although the ear may present pathological signs like any other part of the face, the clinical significance of the observation of the ears is that they can give us an indication also of the constitution of the person; for

example, large ears with long earlobes indicate a good constitution.

1. LARGE EARS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

The ears should be proportionate to the size of the head; therefore, what is a 'large' ear for one person might be 'normal' for another. A large ear generally indicates a good hereditary constitution, a constitutional tendency to abundance of Qi and Blood, and a propensity to Full conditions. However, it does so only if it is proportionate to the size of the head, well-shaped, and does not stick out and if the lobe is long and well formed.

2. SMALL EARS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Small ears generally indicate a poor hereditary constitution (especially if the lobe is very small), a constitutional tendency to deficiency of Qi and Blood, and a propensity to Deficiency conditions.

3. SWOLLEN EARS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Swollen ears are generally due to Heat or Damp-Heat, which may derive from various organs but particularly from the Gall-Bladder ([Fig. 9.2](#)). Another possible cause of swollen ears is invasion of Wind-Water in the Lungs.

4. CONTRACTED EARS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Contracted ears look somewhat 'crumpled' and 'squashed'. Contracted ears are generally due to deficiency of body fluids, which may derive either from Heat injuring the body fluids or from Yin deficiency. A less common cause of contracted ears is a severe stasis of Blood in the abdomen with abdominal masses: the severely stagnant Qi and Blood fail to nourish the muscles and flesh so that the person loses weight and the ears become contracted. This situation could occur, for example, with carcinomas of the abdomen.



Figure 9.2. Swollen ear (also red helix)

5. DRY AND CONTRACTED HELIX

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

The most common cause of a contracted, dry helix with a rough and scaly texture is Blood stasis, sometimes combined with Damp-Heat. A dry and dark helix may also be due to Kidney-Yin deficiency. A jagged helix indicates chronic Blood stasis.

6. SORES ON THE EAR

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Sores on the ear are always due to Heat. They may derive from various organs but are particularly related to the Liver and Gall-Bladder. Another cause of acute sores on the ear is invasion of Wind-Heat in the Lesser-Yang channels.

7. WARTS ON THE EAR

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Warts on the ear are generally due to Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder, but they may also be due to Heat in the Stomach channel (as the deep pathway of the Stomach channel goes to the ear).

8. YELLOW HELIX

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Damp-Heat is the most common cause of a yellow helix; it would be bright-yellow if Heat predominates and dull-yellow if Dampness predominates. Another possible cause of a yellow helix is Blood stasis deriving from Heat, in which case the helix will be dull, dark yellow.

9. PALE HELIX

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

A pale helix is due either to Yang deficiency (bright-pale) or to Blood deficiency (dull-pale). A less common cause of a pale helix is invasion of Wind-Water in the Lungs. A 'thick', deep, white colour indicates Qi deficiency with Phlegm.

10. BLUISH-GREENISH (QING) HELIX

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Blood stasis is the main cause of a bluish-greenish helix. The helix is greenish if the Blood stasis derives from Heat and bluish if it derives from Cold. A particular case of bluish-greenish helix is that seen in children suffering from acute convulsions from internal Wind.

11. DARK HELIX

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

The helix may become dark either from Blood stasis or from chronic Heat. A greenish-dark helix indicates Kidney-Yin deficiency.

12. RED HELIX

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

A red helix generally indicates Heat, especially of the Heart and/or Lungs; it may also indicate Heat in the Lesser-Yang channels or Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder. A 'floating' red colour of the helix is due to Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat ([Fig. 9.3](#)).



Figure 9.3. Red helix (also swollen ear)

13. RED BACK OF THE EAR

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

The usual cause of redness at the back of the ear is invasion of Wind-Heat. It is also seen in the beginning stages of measles.

14. DISTENDED BLOOD VESSELS ON THE EAR

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

The two main causes of visible distended blood vessels in the ear are Lung-Qi deficiency with retention of Phlegm and Blood stasis.

15. EXCESSIVE WAX PRODUCTION

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Excessive wax production is usually caused by Phlegm, which may affect various organs. Another common cause of excessive wax production is Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder. Deficiency conditions causing excessive wax production include Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat.

16. SWELLING AND REDNESS OF THE CONCHA

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder is the most common cause of redness and swelling of the concha.

In chronic conditions, Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty heat may also cause a redness and swelling of the concha, whereas in acute conditions Toxic Heat may cause it.

17. DISCHARGE FROM THE EARS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

In acute cases, discharge from the ear can be due to invasion of Wind-Heat affecting the Lesser Yang channels or to Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder: the latter may also cause ear discharge in chronic conditions. Both Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness may cause an intermittent, thin discharge from the ear.



TREATMENT NOTE

Wind-Heat in the Lesser-Yang channels: T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Damp-Heat in Gall-Bladder: T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi, G.B.-43 Xiaxi.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: KI-3 Taixi, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness: L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan.



CHAPTER 9 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The channels influencing the ears.
- The clinical significance of ear size, ear dryness, sores, and warts.
- The implications of abnormal ear colour.
- The clinical significance of distended blood vessels, excessive wax production, and ear discharge.

END NOTES

1. 1981 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经). People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 50.
2. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问). People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 41.
3. Spiritual Axis, p. 78.
4. Simple Questions, p. 26.

10

Observation of Throat and Neck

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Throat*Redness on the throat**Goitre**Pulsation of the carotid artery**Observation of the pharynx**Swollen tonsils**Red and swollen tonsils**Red and swollen tonsils with exudate**Greyish tonsils***Neck***Long neck**Short neck**Rigidity of the neck**Soft neck**Deviated neck**Wide neck**Thin neck**Swollen neck glands*

- f) Red and Swollen Tonsils
- g) Red, Swollen Tonsils with Exudate
- h) Greyish Tonsils

2. Neck

- a) Long Neck
- b) Short Neck
- c) Rigidity of the Neck
- d) Soft Neck
- e) Deviated Neck
- f) Wide Neck
- g) Thin Neck
- h) Swollen Neck Glands

The symptoms and signs related to the throat and neck are discussed in [Chapters 59](#) and [62](#), respectively, in Part 5.

1. THROAT

a) Redness on the throat

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

‘Throat’ here refers not to the inside of the throat (the pharynx), but rather to a redness on the skin outside.

A redness on the throat area (usually in the front and on the sides) always indicates Heat, which may be Full or Empty; it often appears during the consultation when the patient is answering questions. This redness is usually due to Full or Empty Heat of the Heart or Lungs.

b) Goitre

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

The most common cause of goitre is Liver-Qi stagnation with Phlegm, usually occurring against a background of Spleen-Qi deficiency. It may also be caused by Phlegm and Blood stasis, Liver-Fire blazing with Phlegm, or Heart- and Liver-Yin deficiency with Phlegm ([Fig. 10.2](#)).

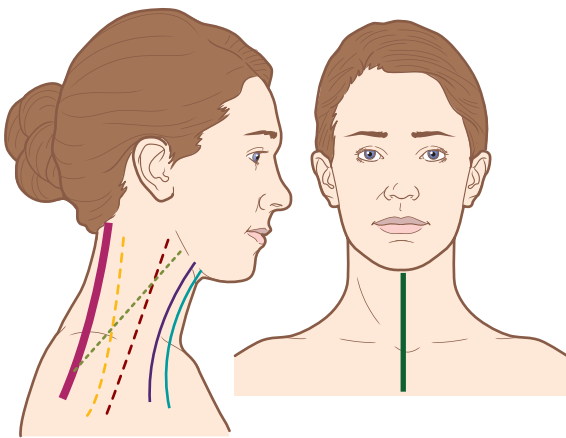
Practically all channels, with the exception of the Bladder, flow through the throat, but the most important channels involved in the various symptoms and signs of this area are the Directing Vessel for the front of the neck (throat area), the Stomach and Large Intestine for the sides of the throat, the Triple Burner and Gall-Bladder for the sides of the neck, and the Governing Vessel and Bladder channel for the back of the neck.

The pathways of the channels flowing through the neck are illustrated in [Fig. 10.1](#).

Throat and neck signs will be discussed in the following sections:

1. Throat

- a) Redness on the Throat
- b) Goitre
- c) Pulsation of the Carotid Artery
- d) Observation of the Pharynx
- e) Swollen Tonsils



- Large Intestine Channel (Main, Divergent, Muscle and Connecting)
- Stomach Channel (Main, Divergent, Muscle and Connecting)
- - - Triple Burner Channel (Main, Divergent and Muscle)
- - - Small Intestine Channel (Main, Divergent and Muscle)
- - - Gall-Bladder Channel (Main, Divergent and Muscle)
- Bladder Channel (Main, Divergent and Muscle)
- Directing Vessel

Figure 10.1. Channels flowing through the neck.

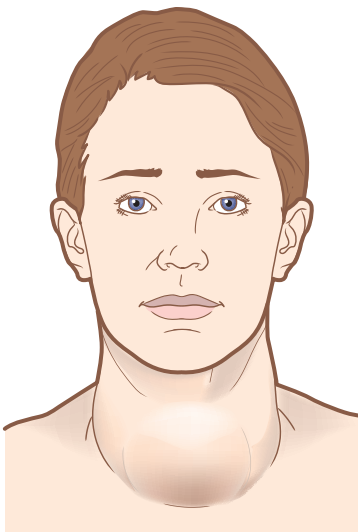


Figure 10.2. Goitre.

c) Pulsation of the carotid artery

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 62](#)

Normally, carotid pulsations may be visible just medial to the sternocleidomastoid muscles, but 'pulsation of the carotid artery' signifies an excessive pulsation that is clearly visible. This may indicate either Water overflowing to the Heart or chronic Phlegm in the Lungs.

d) Observation of the pharynx

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

To observe the pharynx, ask the patient to open the mouth; then, press the tongue down firmly with a disposable tongue blade, positioned far enough back to allow a good view of the pharynx but not so far as to cause gagging. Simultaneously ask the patient to say 'ah' or to yawn. Inspect the palate, the tonsils, and the pharynx at this time ([Fig. 10.3](#)).

The pharynx should always be observed when a patient complains of acute or chronic 'sore throat'; if the pharynx mucous membrane is red, it indicates Heat or Empty Heat. In the many cases when patients complain of sore throat but there is no redness of the pharynx, the cause is often either stagnation of Qi (of the Liver or Lungs) or Yin deficiency (of the Lungs and/or Kidneys).

If the pharynx is deep-red on observation, it indicates Full Heat, which may be exterior or interior. The inside of the throat may become red in acute invasions of Wind-Heat affecting the Lung channel, a condition especially common in children. In interior conditions, a redness of the inside of the throat may be due to Full Heat in the Lungs or Stomach and Intestines, the latter being more common in children. If the inside of the throat is pale-red, it indicates Empty Heat affecting the Lung and/or Kidney channels.

Erosion, redness, and swelling of the pharynx indicate Toxic Heat, which is seen more frequently in children suffering from acute upper respiratory infections.

Erosion, swelling, and a yellowish-red colour of the pharynx, together with foul breath and a thick-yellow tongue coating, indicate Full Heat in the Stomach and Intestines; this, again, is more common in children.

A chronic erosion of the pharynx that comes and goes is usually due to Empty Heat, which may affect Stomach, Lungs or Kidneys.

Chronic erosion and dryness of the pharynx that come and go with greyish ulcers, no swelling, and a dry but not painful throat indicate chronic, severe Yin deficiency.

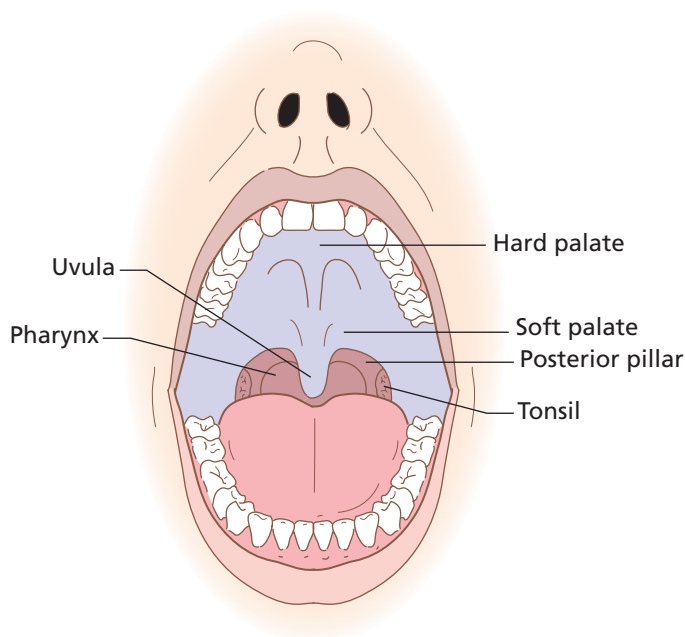


Figure 10.3. Pharynx.

Chronic erosion of the pharynx with ulcers that have raised, hard edges indicates Blood stasis mixed with Phlegm-Heat.

PHARYNX SIGNS

- Deep-red: Heat (interior or exterior)
- Pale-red: Empty Heat
- Erosion, redness and swelling: Toxic Heat
- Erosion, swelling, yellowish-red: Heat in Stomach and Intestines
- Chronic erosion that comes and goes: Empty Heat
- Chronic dryness and erosion with greyish ulcers: severe Yin deficiency
- Chronic erosion with ulcers that have raised, hard edges: Blood stasis with Phlegm-Heat

e) Swollen tonsils

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

Swollen tonsils of a normal colour indicate retention of Dampness or Phlegm occurring against a background of Qi deficiency. This is seen frequently in children with retention of a residual pathogenic factor (e.g., Dampness or Phlegm) after repeated acute upper respiratory infections. If both tonsils are affected, it generally indicates a greater severity than if only one is affected.

A chronic swelling of the tonsils in children is often accompanied by a chronic swelling of the adenoids, itself also a sign of retention of residual Dampness or Phlegm.



TREATMENT NOTE

Residual Dampness with Qi deficiency: Ren-9 Shuifen, L.I.-4 Hegu, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, BL-20 Pishu.

Residual Phlegm with Qi deficiency: ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, L.I.-4 Hegu, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, BL-20 Pishu.

Case History

A 24-year-old woman complained of chronic tonsillitis. She had suffered two or three bouts each year since the age of 5. Six weeks prior to the consultation she had had her tonsils removed, and she had been much worse since then, suffering from sore throat, tiredness, swollen glands, headaches, thirst, a feeling of heaviness, and a congested feeling in the sinuses. Her pulse was Slippery on the whole, but Weak on the right. Her tongue was Red in the front, slightly Thin and with a sticky-yellow coating.

Diagnosis

This is a typical example of residual pathogenic factor, specifically Toxic Heat in the throat. This is an unusual case, as the residual pathogenic factor stems from an operation, whereas it normally develops after a febrile disease. Toxic Heat is manifested by the swollen glands,

the sore throat, a feeling of heaviness, the headache, the Slippery pulse and the Red tongue with a thick-sticky-yellow coating. Obviously, Toxic Heat is only the acute, recent cause of her problem, and there is an underlying deficiency of Stomach and Spleen, probably stemming from the chronic tonsillitis that she had suffered from since childhood. The deficiency of Stomach and Spleen is manifested by the tiredness and Weak pulse.

Treatment principle

This is a very good example of a condition characterised by a mixture of Deficiency and Excess: the residual Toxic Heat is an Excess, acute condition and constitutes the Manifestation (*Biao*), whereas the deficiency of Stomach and Spleen is an Empty, chronic condition and constitutes the Root (*Ben*). In such cases, one should have a clear idea about the priorities of treatment; that is, whether one should treat the Excess, acute condition first or the Deficient, chronic condition first. The pulse, tongue, and severity of the symptoms are important guidelines to assist us in choosing the proper treatment principle. In this case, it is clear that the residual Toxic Heat should be eliminated first because the symptoms are acute, the pulse is Slippery, and the tongue has a thick-sticky-yellow coating.

Treatment

The prescription used was a variation of the formula *Li Yan Cha* (Benefiting the Throat Tea), which is specific to eliminating Toxic Heat from the throat. The use of this prescription produced a complete recovery within 3 weeks.

f) Red and swollen tonsils

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

Red and swollen tonsils indicate Heat or Toxic Heat, often in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine channel. The tonsils should always be inspected in acute invasions of Wind-Heat, particularly in children. Red and swollen tonsils are frequently seen in children during acute upper respiratory infections. During acute invasions of Wind-Heat, a swelling and redness of the tonsils indicate a more severe degree of Wind-Heat and often the presence of Toxic Heat; they also point to an involvement of the Stomach and/or Large Intestine channel and tell us that the child has probably a pre-existing condition of Heat, often Stomach-Heat.

Chronic redness and swelling of the tonsils that come and go indicate either chronic Heat in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine channel (more common in children and often due to a residual pathogenic factor), or Empty Heat in the Lung channel. In both cases, the swelling and redness may be intermittent and less pronounced than in acute cases. Chronic redness and swelling of the tonsils used to be called 'milky moth' (*ru e*) when they resemble the wings of a moth and have a milky fluid on them.

If both tonsils are affected, it generally indicates a greater severity than if only one is affected.



TREATMENT NOTE

Acute redness and swelling of tonsils from Wind-Heat: LU-11 Shaoshan, T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, Du-14 Dazhui.
Chronic redness and swelling of tonsils from Stomach-Heat: ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-11 Qishe.

g) Red and swollen tonsils with exudate

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

Red and swollen tonsils with exudate, usually seen during acute upper respiratory infections and more common in children, definitely indicate an invasion of Wind-Heat (as opposed to Wind-Cold), and this may be complicated by Toxic Heat in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine channel.

A swelling of the tonsils from Toxic Heat was called 'stone moth' (*shi e*) because the two tonsils look like the wings of a moth and have the hardness of a stone. If both tonsils are affected, it generally indicates a greater severity than if only one is affected.

h) Greyish tonsils

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

Greyish tonsils are often seen at the acute stage of glandular fever (mononucleosis).

2. NECK

a) Long neck

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 62](#)

A long neck is generally a sign of a good hereditary constitution ([Fig. 10.4](#)).

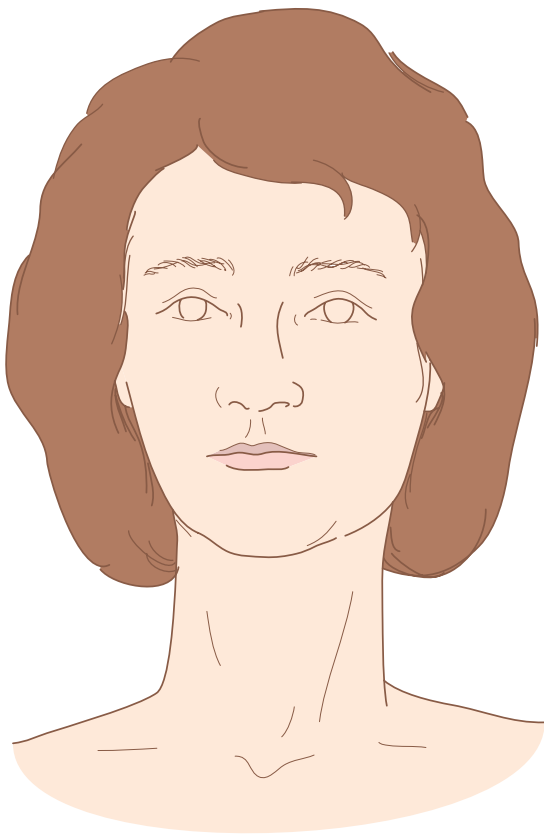


Figure 10.4. Long neck.

b) Short neck

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 62](#)

A short neck may indicate a weak hereditary constitution of the Spleen and Kidneys ([Fig. 10.5](#)).

c) Rigidity of the neck

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 62](#)

‘Rigidity of the neck’ does not refer to the patient’s subjective sensation, but rather to a neck that looks rigid on observation and feels hard on palpation. Rigidity of the neck may be due to Cold in the channels, because it occurs in Painful Obstruction Syndrome. It may also be due to a Liver pattern and especially Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Yang rising, or Liver-Wind.

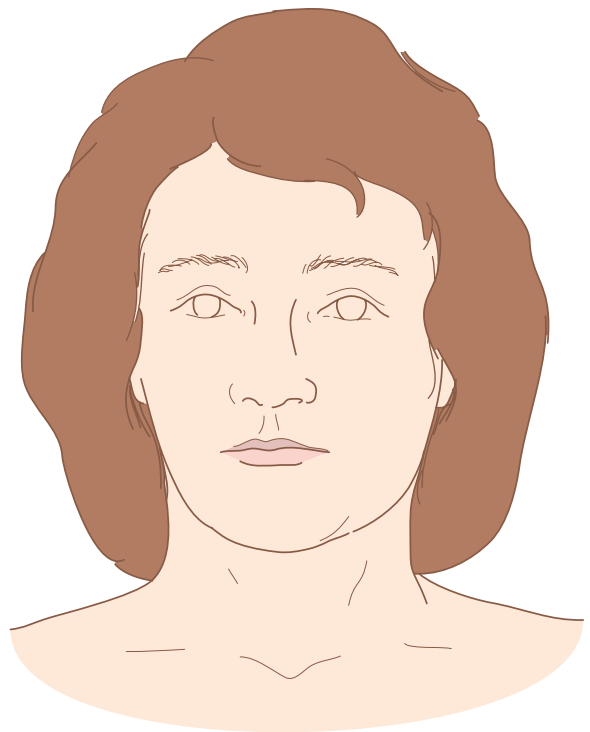


Figure 10.5. Short neck.

d) Soft neck

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 62](#)

A neck with muscles that look soft and feel soft on palpation generally indicates severe deficiency of Qi and Blood or deficiency of Kidney-Yang.

e) Deviated neck

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 62](#)

A deviated neck (leaning to one side) is due either to a weak hereditary Kidney constitution or to severe stagnation of Liver-Qi ([Fig. 10.6](#)).

f) Wide neck

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 62](#)

A wide neck may indicate Qi stagnation with Phlegm, Phlegm with Blood stasis, or Liver-Fire ([Fig. 10.7](#)).

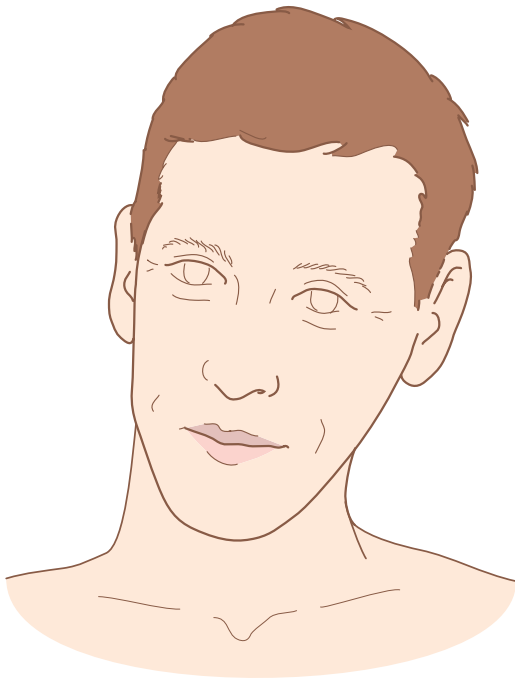


Figure 10.6. Deviated neck.

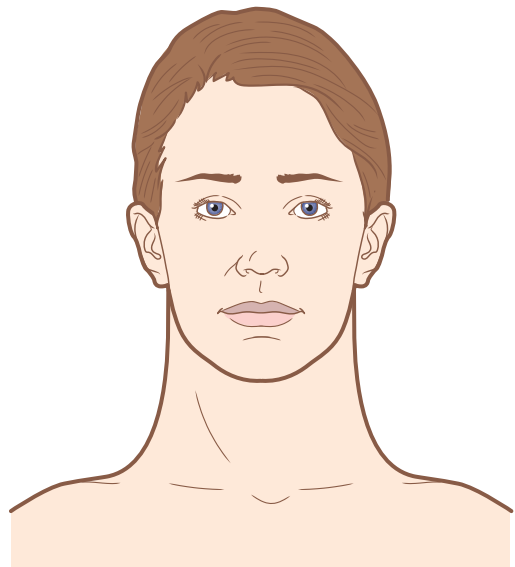


Figure 10.7. Wide neck.

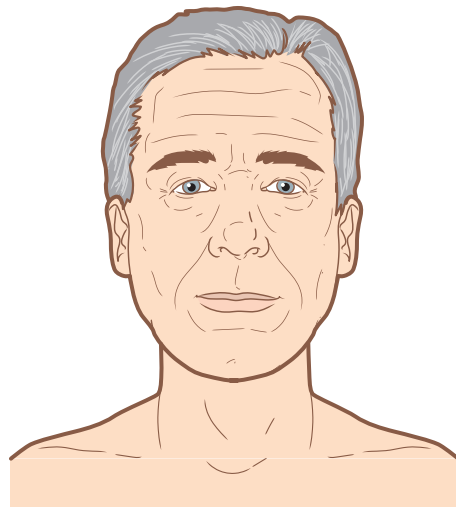


Figure 10.8. Thin neck.

g) Thin neck

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

A thin neck may indicate a severe deficiency of Qi and Blood or chronic Yin deficiency ([Fig. 10.8](#)). This is often seen when the patient, who is usually an elderly man, has the Chinese disease symptom of *Ye Ge* ('Diaphragm Choking'). The patient will be suffering weight loss, exhaustion, difficulty in swallowing, and will feel as if food is stuck between the throat and the diaphragm.

h) Swollen neck glands

[Figure 10.9](#) shows the location of the neck glands.

An acute swelling of the glands of the neck is usually due to an invasion of Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat; in other words, a swelling of the neck glands during an invasion of Wind-Heat indicates that there is also Toxic Heat. This is common, for example, in the acute stage of glandular fever (mononucleosis). In chronic conditions, a swelling of the glands of the neck may also indicate Toxic Heat but one that generally occurs against a background of Qi and/or Yin deficiency.

In chronic cases, a swelling of the glands of the neck may be due to Toxic Heat with Blood stasis, or to Phlegm ([Fig. 10.10](#)).

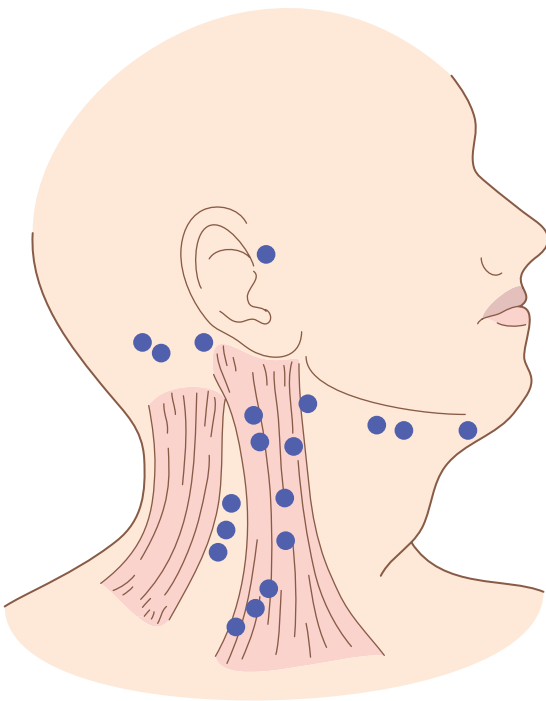


Figure 10.9. Neck glands.

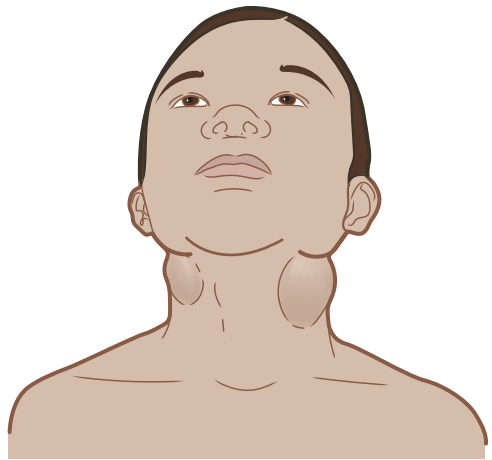


Figure 10.10. Swollen neck glands.



CHAPTER 10 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The channels influencing the throat and neck.
- The pathologies affecting the exterior and interior of the throat.
- The clinical significance of neck lengths and widths, textures, deviations and swollen glands.

Observation of the Back

11

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Spine Bent Forward

Atrophy of the Muscles Along the Spine

Spots on the Back

Scoliosis

Lordosis

Kyphosis

Flattening of the Lumbar Spine

List of the Spine

Rigidity of the Lower Back

Vesicles on the Lower Back

Dryness and Redness of the Skin of the Lower Back

Yellow Colour of the Lower Back

Skin Marks on the Lower Back

Boil on BL-23 Shenshu

Papules or Pustules on the Buttocks

The upper back is influenced by the Governing Vessel and by the Bladder and Lung channels; the lower back is influenced by the Governing Vessel and the Bladder and Kidney channels. More in detail, the pathways of the channels flowing through the back are as follows (Fig. 11.1):

- The Bladder Main channel flows twice over the back.
- The Bladder Divergent channel ascends along the spine.
- The Bladder Muscle channel flows through the muscles alongside the spine.
- The Kidney Main channel enters the sacrum and flows through the lumbar spine.
- The Kidney Divergent channel ascends alongside the spine and connects with the Girdle Vessel at the level of BL-23 Shenshu.
- The Kidney Connecting channel spreads into the lumbar vertebrae.
- The Kidney Muscle channel ascends alongside the spine.

- The Governing Vessel ascends over the spine, and a branch enters the sacrum and the lumbar vertebrae.
- The Governing Vessel Connecting channel connects with the Bladder channel and spreads through the spine.
- The Spleen Muscles channel adheres to the spine.

CHANNELS INFLUENCING THE BACK

- Governing Vessel
- Bladder
- Lung (upper back only)
- Kidneys

The following back signs will be discussed:

1. Spine bent forward
2. Atrophy of the muscles along the spine
3. Spots on the back
4. Scoliosis
5. Lordosis
6. Kyphosis
7. Flattening of the lumbar spine
8. List of the spine
9. Rigidity of the lower back
10. Vesicles on the lower back
11. Dryness and redness of the skin of the lower back
12. Yellow colour of the lower back
13. Skin marks on the lower back
14. Boil on BL-23 Shenshu
15. Papules or pustules on the buttocks

1. SPINE BENT FORWARD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Bending forward of the spine indicates a hereditary Kidney-Essence deficiency, a deficiency of Marrow, and a weakness of the Governing Vessel.

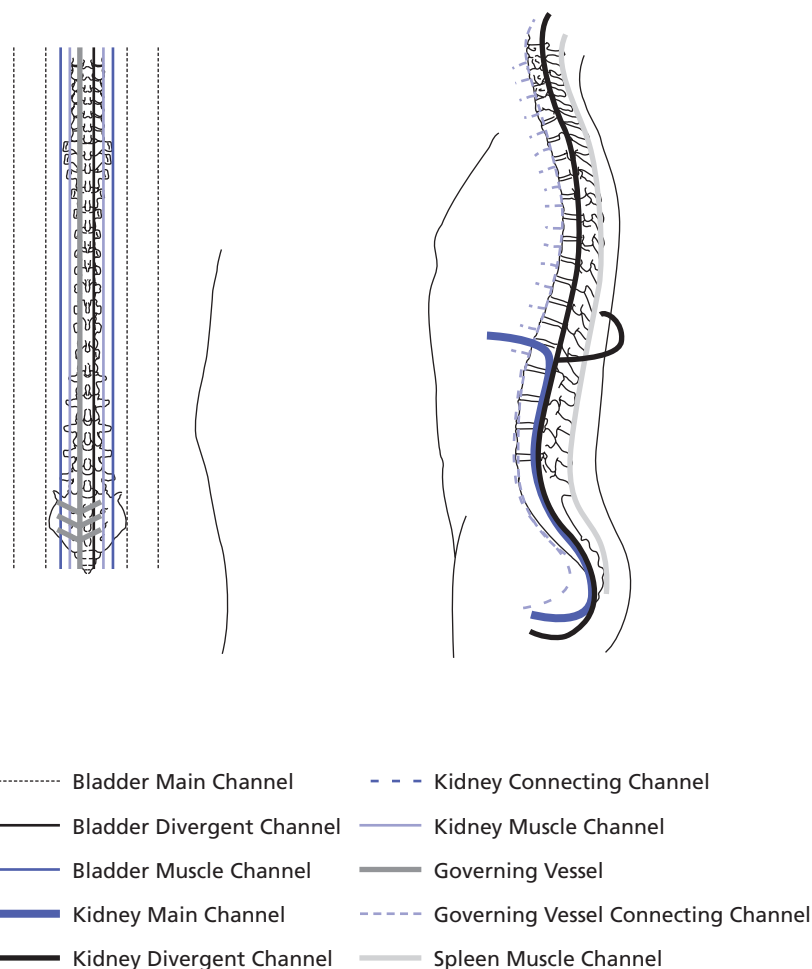


Figure 11.1. Channels flowing through the back.

2. ATROPHY OF THE MUSCLES ALONG THE SPINE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Atrophy of the muscles along the spine indicates a Spleen deficiency because the Spleen nourishes all muscles, but it also has a direct influence on the spine.



CLINICAL NOTE

S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-20 Pishu, Du-16 Fengfu.

3. SPOTS ON THE BACK

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Spots on the back consisting of red papules may indicate invasion of Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat in acute cases or, in chronic cases, Damp-Heat or Qi stagnation turning into Heat. The diagnostic significance of such spots depends also on the location: if they are located in the upper part of the back, in the area between T.1 and T.6, they reflect a pathology of the Lungs; if they are located in the central part of the back between T.6 and T.11, they reflect pathologies of the Heart and Liver; if they are located in the lower back, below T.11, they reflect a pathology of the Kidneys.

Pinhead pustules the size of millet grains usually indicate either Damp-Heat or Phlegm-Heat, and their significance also varies according to the location. If they are located on the upper back, they indicate a pathology of the Greater Yang channels, often of external origin; if they are located on the midback, they indicate Heat or Toxic Heat, often from emotional problems; if they are located on the lower back, they usually indicate Empty Heat from Kidney deficiency, often due to excessive sexual activity.

SPOTS ON BACK

- Between T.1 and T.6: Lungs pathology
- Between T.6 and T.11: Heart and/or Liver pathology
- Below T.11: Kidney pathology

4. SCOLIOSIS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Congenital scoliosis is always due to a deficiency of Kidney-Essence. Acquired scoliosis is due either to a Kidney deficiency with Blood stasis or to retention of Wind-Dampness in the channels of the back (see [Fig. 11.2](#)).



CLINICAL NOTE

S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-4 Mingmen, SP-3 Taibai.

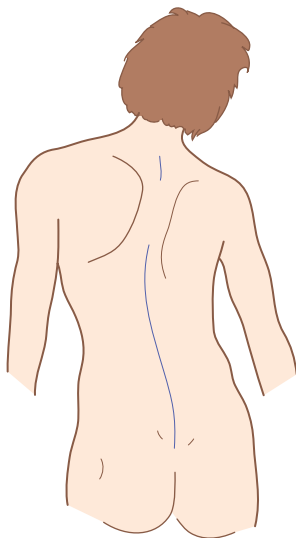


Figure 11.2. Scoliosis.

5. LORDOSIS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Lordosis is an accentuation of the normal lumbar curve ([Fig. 11.3](#)). Congenital lordosis is due to a deficiency of Kidney-Essence, whereas acquired lordosis may be due to a deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen, retention of Wind-Dampness in the channels of the back, or a deficiency of Yin of the Liver or Kidneys.

6. KYPHOSIS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Kyphosis is a rounded convexity of the spine and upper back at the level of the thoracic vertebrae ([Fig. 11.4](#)). It is common in the elderly, more so in women. Kyphosis indicates a decline of Kidney-Essence; in young people it indicates a congenital deficiency of Kidney-Essence.

7. FLATTENING OF THE LUMBAR SPINE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Flattening of the lumbar spine consists of a decreased lumbar curve ([Fig. 11.5](#)). It is often due to a pronounced spasm of the lumbar muscles and decreased spinal mobility; it may suggest the possibility of a herniated

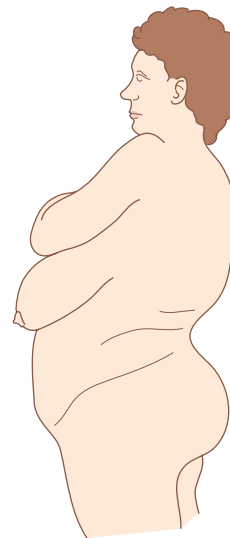


Figure 11.3. Lordosis.

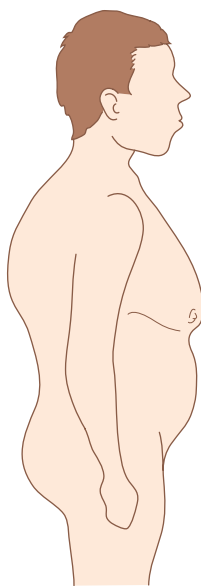


Figure 11.4. Kyphosis.

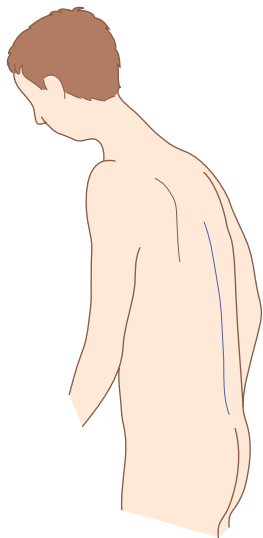


Figure 11.5. Flattening of the lumbar spine.

lumbar disc. The cause may be Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Blood stasis, or Cold in the lower back.

8. LIST OF THE SPINE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

A list is a lateral tilt of the spine ([Fig. 11.6](#)). When a plumb line dropped from T.1 falls to one side of the gluteal

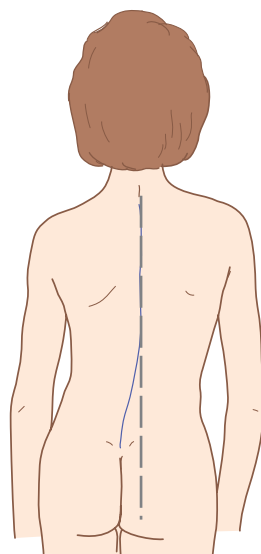


Figure 11.6. List of the spine.

cleft, a list is present. This may be due to a herniated disc or to spasm of the paravertebral muscles. It usually indicates Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, or Damp-Cold in the lower back.

9. RIGIDITY OF THE LOWER BACK

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Rigidity of the lower back indicates either retention of Damp-Cold in the lower back or Blood stasis.

10. VESICLES ON THE LOWER BACK

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Vesicles filled with clear fluid on the lower back, which look like a string of pearls, indicate retention of Damp-Heat.

11. DRYNESS AND REDNESS OF THE SKIN OF THE LOWER BACK

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

A red and dry macular rash on the skin of the lower back that is itchy and hot indicates Liver- and Heart-Fire.

12. YELLOW COLOUR OF THE LOWER BACK

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

A yellow colour of the lower back with small vesicles indicates Damp-Heat in the Spleen and Kidneys.

13. SKIN MARKS ON THE LOWER BACK

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

A discolouration of the skin of the lower back that looks like long markings in the skin, often resembling a belt, and which is neither itchy nor painful, indicates a pathology of the Girdle Vessel and a Kidney deficiency often due to excessive sexual activity.

14. BOIL ON BL-23 SHENSHU

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

A boil on BL-23 Shenshu indicates Phlegm occurring against a background of Kidney deficiency.

15. PAPULES OR PUSTULES ON THE BUTTOCKS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Papules or pustules on the buttocks indicate Damp-Heat in the Bladder channel.



CHAPTER 11 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The channels influencing the back.
- The causes of atrophy, rigidity of the lower back, and spinal curve abnormalities.
- The implications of different skin signs on the back.

12

Observation of Female Breasts

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Breast distension**Swollen breasts****Small breasts****Breast lumps***Case history**Diagnosis***Redness and swelling of the breasts****Milky nipple discharge****Sticky-yellow nipple discharge****Bloody discharge from the nipple****Inverted nipples****Cracked nipples****Peau d'orange**

The following breast signs will be discussed:

1. Breast distension
2. Swollen breasts
3. Small breasts
4. Breast lumps
5. Redness and swelling of the breasts
6. Milky nipple discharge
7. Sticky-yellow nipple discharge
8. Bloody discharge from the nipple
9. Inverted nipples
10. Cracked nipples
11. Peau d'orange

The symptoms and signs related to the breast are discussed in Part 5, [Chapter 88](#).

1. BREAST DISTENSION

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

Breast distension is both a subjective sensation and an objective sign. The patient is uncomfortably aware of the distension of the breasts, and this distension is visible. It is very common in pre-menstrual syndrome. The most common cause of this sign is Liver-Qi stagnation. It should be remembered that Qi stagnation can occur also in the Lungs, and Lung-Qi stagnation may also cause breast distension. A slight breast distension may also occur with a Spleen and Kidney deficiency.

The routine observation in clinical practice does not normally include a woman's breasts, but it is carried out when a patient reports specific breast problems, such as tenderness, pain, or lumps.

The channels coursing through the breast are illustrated in [Fig. 12.1](#).

As we can see, the main channels influencing the breast are the Liver, Stomach, and Penetrating Vessel; in addition, the Muscle channels of the Heart, Pericardium, and Gall-Bladder flow through the breast. In the internal anatomy of the breast, the various structures are influenced by the following channels or tissues:

- Glandular lobes: Stomach channel
- Milk ducts: Stomach channel and Penetrating Vessel
- Nipple: Liver channel
- Areola: Penetrating Vessel
- Adipose tissue in the breast: Fat Tissue (*Gao*)
- Connective tissue compartments: Membranes (*Huang*)
- Blood vessels in the breast: Penetrating Vessel



CLINICAL NOTE

LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou, G.B.-41 Zulinqi.



Remember: breast distension may be caused not only by Liver-Qi stagnation, but also by Lung- and/or Heart-Qi stagnation.

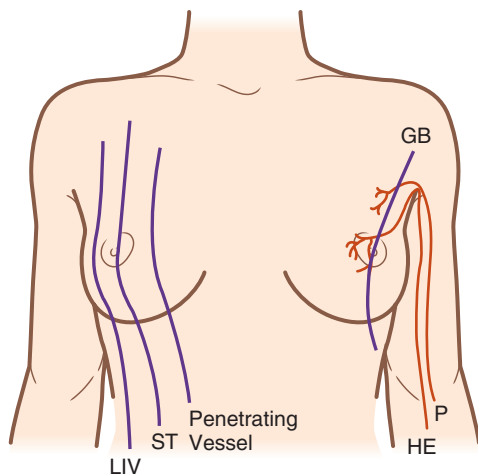


Figure 12.1. Channels coursing through breast.

2. SWOLLEN BREASTS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

A more severe stage of distension is the swelling of the breasts, which are noticeably larger than normal and often also painful. Swelling of the breasts is mostly due to Liver-Qi stagnation but with concurrent Phlegm. In a few cases it may be due to Phlegm occurring against a background of Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency.



CLINICAL NOTE

LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou, G.B.-41 Zulinqi, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen.

3. SMALL BREASTS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

Here 'small breasts' does not mean breasts that are constitutionally small, but rather those that have become small. If the breasts become smaller, it indicates Qi and Blood deficiency or Yin deficiency. The sagging of the breasts may indicate Stomach deficiency or dryness of the Blood.

4. BREAST LUMPS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#); Part 3 Palpation, [Chapter 51](#)

There are four broad categories of breast lumps in Western medicine: cysts, fibroadenomas, breast nodularity, and carcinoma of the breast.

Cysts, also called fibrocystic disease, are the most common benign condition of the breast. They are usually bilateral, and they feel soft and moveable on palpation. From the Chinese point of view, they are usually due to Phlegm. Cysts are most common between the ages of 30 and 50.

Fibroadenoma, the next most common benign breast disease, occurs most often in young women. The adenoma is usually a single, unilateral lump and, on palpation, feels harder than a cyst. From the Chinese point of view, it is due either to Blood stasis or to a combination of Blood stasis and Phlegm. Fibroadenomas are most common between the ages of 20 and 30.

Breast nodularity and tenderness occur before menstruation and usually decrease after the period. From the Chinese point of view, breast nodularity is due to a combination of Liver-Qi stagnation and Phlegm. It is most common between the ages of 30 and 50.

Carcinoma of the breast usually presents with a single, painless, unilateral, immovable, hard lump with indistinct margins. Its incidence is highest after the age of 50. It is nearly always due to a combination of Phlegm and Blood stasis occurring against a background of disharmony of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels. In carcinoma of the breast, there may be Toxic Heat in addition to Phlegm and Blood stasis. Phlegm is usually manifested by a Swollen tongue with a sticky coating; Blood stasis by a Purple colour on the breast areas of the tongue ([Fig. 12.2](#)); and Toxic Heat by a Red tongue with a thick, dry, dark-yellow coating and red points.

THREE FACTORS IN BREAST LUMPS

1. Qi stagnation
2. Blood stasis
3. Phlegm

Thus, the three most common patterns leading to the formation of breast lumps (benign or malignant) are Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, and Phlegm; however,

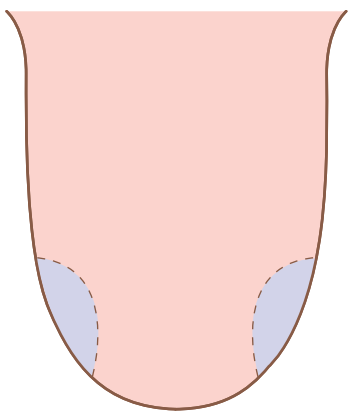


Figure 12.2. Areas corresponding to breast on tongue.

the first of these, Qi stagnation, usually accompanies the second and third. In Chinese medicine the Qi stagnation that leads to the formation of breast lumps is usually considered to be the result of emotional stress; this may be Liver-Qi stagnation, caused by such emotions as anger, resentment, or repressed frustration, or Lung-Qi stagnation, caused by sadness, worry, or grief. Both conditions affect the breast and may lead to the formation of lumps.



Remember: Qi stagnation affecting the breast may derive not only from the Liver, but also from the Lungs.

Case History

A 39-year-old woman had been suffering from a lump in the left breast (upper-left quadrant) for 5 years. The size of the lump had varied in relation to her menstrual cycle, increasing slightly before the period and decreasing afterwards. The lump was sometimes also painful. A biopsy, mammogram, and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan had confirmed the absence of any malignancy. The lump was neither a fibroadenoma nor a cyst and had been described simply as 'breast tenderness and nodularity'. On palpation, the lump was firm but not too hard, elongated, and mobile. There was no lymph node involvement in the axilla.

Her periods were regular, not painful, and neither too heavy or scanty; she did suffer from pre-menstrual distension of the breasts and abdomen. She had no other symptoms, apart from a tendency to loose stools.

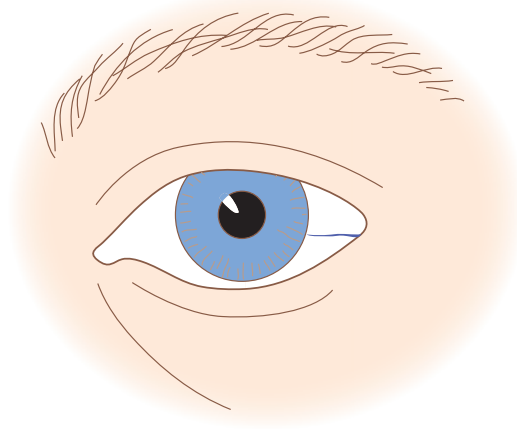


Figure 12.3. Horizontal vein in eye.

On observation, her complexion was dull and sallow and her eyes were slightly 'staring'; there was also a horizontal red vein starting from the outer corner of the left eye and reaching the edge of the pupil (Figs. 12.3 and 12.4). In addition, the white under the pupil was visible (this is not normally visible).

Her tongue was Red on the sides and tip, had a yellow coating, and teeth marks in the left breast area (Fig. 12.5). Her pulse was Slippery on the whole; the left side was Slippery and Wiry, especially on the Liver position, while the left-Front position was relatively Overflowing; the pulse was also slightly Rapid (84).

Diagnosis

In breast lumps, the most common pathogenic factors are Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Blood stasis, and Phlegm, appearing in varying combinations. In this case, there are signs of all three patterns. There is Liver-Qi stagnation because of the pre-menstrual distension, the varying size of the lump in relation to the menstrual cycle, and the Wiry pulse. There is Liver-Blood stasis because the lump is firm and slightly painful and the pulse is Wiry; there is Phlegm because the pulse is Slippery. Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Blood stasis are the predominant patterns compared to Phlegm. The chronic Liver-Qi stagnation has given rise to Liver-Heat and Heart-Heat, as evidenced by the Red sides and tip on the tongue; this is also confirmed by the rapidity of the pulse and the Overflowing quality on the Heart pulse.

The teeth marks in the left breast area on the tongue indicate that the breast pathology occurs against a background of Spleen-Qi deficiency, which is also



Figure 12.4. Horizontal vein in left eye.

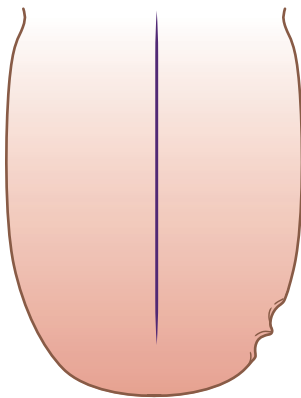


Figure 12.5. Teeth marks in left breast area.

confirmed by the tendency to loose stools. The slightly staring look of the eyes indicates that the Mind and Spirit are disturbed from emotional problems which, on interrogation, she confirmed having. The showing of the white under the pupil is generally a poor prognostic sign. The red vein in the left eye was in the Heart and Lung area and in the lower part of the sclera corresponding to the chest.

5. REDNESS AND SWELLING OF THE BREASTS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

Redness and swelling of the breasts usually indicate the presence of Heat, often Toxic Heat, combined with either Phlegm or Blood stasis. It is usually accompanied by breast pain, and it may correspond to mastitis in Western medicine.

6. MILKY NIPPLE DISCHARGE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

A milky nipple discharge is usually due to a deficiency condition: it may be a severe deficiency of Qi and Blood or a deficiency of Spleen- and Kidney-Yang; in some cases, it may also be due to Liver-Qi stagnation.

7. STICKY-YELLOW NIPPLE DISCHARGE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

A sticky-yellow nipple discharge is due either to Damp-Heat in the Liver channel or to Toxic Heat. In Western medicine, this may be caused by duct ectasia or epithelial hyperplasia.



CLINICAL NOTE

G.B.-41 Zulingqi, ST-18 Rugen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, LIV-3 Taichong.

8. BLOODY DISCHARGE FROM THE NIPPLE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

As in all forms of bleeding, the two main causes are either Blood-Heat or Qi not holding Blood. In cases of a bloody discharge from the nipple, Toxic Heat is a common cause, especially in acute conditions. In chronic conditions, stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat may also cause an intermittent bloody nipple discharge; as for Deficiency conditions, a deficiency of the Liver and Kidneys and of the Penetrating Vessel may cause an intermittent bloody nipple discharge with pale blood.

9. INVERTED NIPPLES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

The inverting of a nipple is usually caused by complex pathologies: it may be due to Liver-Qi and Liver-Blood stagnation combined with Phlegm or to Toxic Heat in the Blood combined with Blood stasis. From a Western medicine perspective, an inverted nipple may indicate an advanced stage of carcinoma of the breast.

10. CRACKED NIPPLES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

Cracked nipples may be caused either by stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Fire or by Liver-Yin deficiency with Blood-Heat.

11. PEAU D'ORANGE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#)

'Peau d'orange' refers to the appearance of an area of the breast that is covered with small dimples so that its

texture resembles the rind of an orange. This may be due to Liver-Qi and Liver-Blood stagnation combined with Phlegm or due to Toxic Heat in the Blood combined with Blood stasis. From a Western medicine perspective, peau d'orange may indicate an advanced stage of carcinoma of the breast.



CHAPTER 12 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The channels influencing the breasts.
- The implication of pathological breast size.
- The Western and Chinese medical diagnosis behind the four main categories of breast lumps.
- The causes of breast lumps, nipple abnormalities, and peau d'orange breast skin.

END NOTE

1. Maciocia, G. 1999 *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, p. 147.

13

Observation of the Heartbeat

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Heartbeat displaced downwards
 Heartbeat displaced upwards
 Heartbeat displaced to the left
 Heartbeat displaced to the right
 Heartbeat below the xyphoid process

Observation of the heartbeat refers to observation of the pulsation of the left ventricle. In surface anatomy the left ventricle of the heart forms the organ's left border and produces the apical impulse; that is, the heart systolic beat that can be felt in the fifth intercostal space, 7 to 9 centimetres from the mid-sternal line either on the mid-clavicular line or just medial to it (Fig. 13.1).

Although the pulsation of the left ventricle can always be felt on palpation, it cannot be observed under normal circumstances; it is only when there is a pathological state of the heart that the beat becomes visible on observation. Tangential lighting helps to detect an abnormal pulsation.

THE PULSATION OF XU LI

The heartbeat of the left ventricle, which can be felt in the fifth intercostal space, was called *Xu Li* in ancient Chinese medicine; this is another name for the Great Connecting channel of the Stomach. This channel cuts through the diaphragm and the lungs and exits below the left breast, producing the heartbeat. It is also said to be the area where the Gathering Qi (*Zong Qi*) converges. The Gathering Qi itself is said to govern the two channels.

The *Xu Li* is described in Chapter 18 of the 'Simple Questions', which says: *'The Great Connecting channel of the Stomach is called Xu Li. It cuts through the diaphragm*

and connects with the lungs, it exits below the left breast and its beat is the beating of the Gathering Qi'.¹ It is interesting, therefore, that although the pulsation in the fifth intercostal space is obviously the pulsation of the left ventricle, in Chinese medicine it is also related to the Stomach, and for this reason the Stomach channel has an important influence on the heart (both in a Chinese and a Western sense), especially the heart rhythm. Besides the Stomach, the apical beat is also related to the Lungs, as it reflects the 'beating' of the Gathering Qi.

As mentioned above, if the heartbeat in the fifth intercostal space can be observed, it indicates an abnormal state of the heart by definition.

The following signs will be discussed:

1. Heartbeat displaced downwards
2. Heartbeat displaced upwards
3. Heartbeat displaced to the left
4. Heartbeat displaced to the right
5. Heartbeat below the xyphoid process

For a more detailed description of the symptoms and signs related to each pattern, please see Chapter 63.

1. HEARTBEAT DISPLACED DOWNWARDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 63

When displaced downwards, the heartbeat can be seen in the sixth intercostal space. From the Western medicine point of view, this may be caused by hypertension, congenital heart disease, myocarditis, or enlargement of the heart in heart failure.

From a Chinese perspective, the most likely patterns to appear in the above heart conditions are Qi deficiency with Blood stasis, Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency (especially in the elderly), Phlegm-Fluids obstructing the Heart, or Toxic Heat invading the Heart.

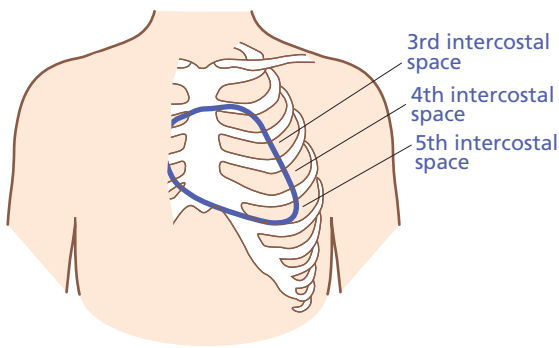


Figure 13.1. Location of apical beat.

2. HEARTBEAT DISPLACED UPWARDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

When the heartbeat is displaced upwards, it can be seen either in the fourth or the third intercostal space. From the Western medicine point of view, this may be caused by hypertension, ascites, enlargement of the right heart, or a tumour in the abdominal cavity.

From a Chinese medicine perspective, the most likely patterns to appear in the above conditions are Yang deficiency with Water overflowing or Liver-Blood stasis with Water overflowing.

3. HEARTBEAT DISPLACED TO THE LEFT

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

When the heartbeat is displaced to the left, it can be seen lateral to the mid-axillary line. From a Western medicine point of view, it may occur in pleuritis of the right side of the chest or in congestive cardiac failure.

From the Chinese medicine point of view, the most likely patterns to appear in this condition are Phlegm-Fluids in the chest and hypochondrium or Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs.

4. HEARTBEAT DISPLACED TO THE RIGHT

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

When the heartbeat is displaced to the right, it can be seen medial to the mid-axillary line. From a Western medicine point of view, it may be due to a congenital heart condition or pleuritis of the left side of the chest.

From a Chinese medicine point of view, the most likely patterns to appear in this condition are Qi deficiency with Blood stasis and Phlegm-Fluids in the chest and hypochondrium.

5. HEARTBEAT BELOW THE XYPHOID PROCESS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

From the Western medicine point of view, a heartbeat below the xiphoid process may be seen in defects of the tricuspid valve, right heart disease, emphysema, or enlargement of the right heart.

From the Chinese medicine point of view, the most likely patterns to appear in these conditions are Heart-Blood stasis or Heart-Qi deficiency.



CHAPTER 13 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Where the heartbeat of the left ventricle (*Xu Li*) is felt in health.
- The clinical implications of a displaced heartbeat.

END NOTE

1. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问). People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 111. First published c.100 BC.

Observation of the Hands

14

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Pale hands

Red dorsum of the hands

Red palms

Venules on the thenar eminence

Atrophy of the thenar eminence

Atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum of the hands

Tremor of the hands

Contraction of the fingers

Spoon-shaped fingers

Thin, pointed fingers

Swollen fingers

Cracked fingers

Tinea (ringworm)

Thickened fingers like cocoons

Shrivelled and wrinkled fingers

Deformed knuckles

Dry, cracked, peeling palms

Sweaty palms

Hand lines

Description of the lines

Description of abnormal signs on the lines

Diseases indicated on the lines

4. Venules on the thenar eminence
5. Atrophy of the thenar eminence
6. Atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum of the hands
7. Tremor of the hands
8. Contraction of the fingers
9. Spoon-shaped fingers
10. Thin, pointed fingers
11. Swollen fingers
12. Cracked fingers
13. Tinea (ringworm)
14. Thickened fingers like cocoons
15. Shrivelled and wrinkled fingers
16. Deformed knuckles
17. Dry, cracked, peeling palms
18. Sweaty palms
19. Hand lines
 - a) Description of lines
 - b) Description of abnormal signs on the lines
 - c) Diseases indicated on the lines

For a more detailed description of the hand signs discussed below, please see [Chapter 65](#), Part 5 Symptoms and Signs.

Observation of the hands has always formed a relatively important aspect of diagnosis. It is mentioned in several chapters of the 'Simple Questions' and 'Spiritual Axis', as well as in 'Discussion of Origin of Symptoms in Diseases' (*Zhu Bing Yuan Huo Lun*, 610 AD by Chao Yuan Fang). The description of index finger diagnosis in children was discussed by the Tang dynasty doctor Wang Chao in the book 'Illustrated Formula of the Water Mirror' (*Shui Jing Tu Jue*).

The following hand signs will be discussed:

1. Pale hands
2. Red dorsum of the hands
3. Red palms

1. PALE HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Pale hands are usually due to either Yang deficiency or Blood deficiency. Heart-Yang or Lung-Yang deficiency in particular may cause the hands to be pale. As for Blood deficiency, pale hands are usually caused by Heart-Blood or Liver-Blood deficiency.



CLINICAL NOTE

P-6 Neiguan, HE-5 Tongli, Ren-4 Guanyuan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-8 Ququan.

2. RED DORSUM OF THE HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Red dorsum of the hands is generally due to Full Heat, particularly of the Heart, Lungs, or Stomach.

3. RED PALMS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Red palms are generally due to Empty Heat, particularly of the Heart, Lungs, or Stomach.

4. VENULES ON THE THENAR EMINENCE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

The thenar eminence shows the state of the Stomach. [Chapter 10](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' relates the colour of the thenar eminence to the state of the Stomach: 'When the Stomach has Cold, the thenar eminence is bluish; when the Stomach has Heat, the thenar eminence is reddish; if it is suddenly black, it indicates chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome; if it is sometimes red, sometimes dark and sometimes bluish it indicates alternation of Heat and Cold; if it is bluish and short, it indicates deficiency of Qi'.¹ [Chapter 74](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'When the thenar eminence has bluish venules, it indicates Cold in the Stomach'.²

Bluish or bluish-purple venules on the thenar eminence generally indicate Cold in the Stomach; if they are bluish but short, they indicate deficiency of Qi or Empty Cold from Stomach-Yang deficiency. Reddish venules indicate either Full Heat or Empty Heat (usually of the Stomach and/or Lungs); if they are reddish-purple, they may indicate Blood stasis in the Stomach; and if yellowish-red, Damp-Heat in the Stomach is indicated.

5. ATROPHY OF THE THENAR EMINENCE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

The size and consistency of the thenar eminence are related to the state of the Stomach. When the thenar eminence is full, the state of the Stomach is good.

Atrophy of the thenar eminence may be due to deficiency of Yang of the Stomach, Spleen and Kidneys or deficiency of Yin of the Stomach, Liver and Kidneys.

6. ATROPHY OF THE MUSCLES OF THE DORSUM OF THE HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum may be due to deficiency of Liver-Blood, deficiency of Kidney-Yin or deficiency of Qi of the Stomach and Spleen.

7. TREMOR OF THE HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Tremor of the hands is a sign of Internal Wind, which may be of the Full or Empty type. Internal Wind is always related to the Liver, and Liver-Wind and Wind-Phlegm in the Liver are the most frequent causes of tremor of the hands, especially in the elderly.

Empty-Wind of the Liver causes a fine tremor of the hands; it may derive from Blood or Yin deficiency. Internal Wind causing tremor of the hands may also develop suddenly following a deep shock or a great fright.

In alcoholics, a fine tremor of the hands is caused by Phlegm-Heat. In rare cases, retention of Dampness in the muscles and sinews of the hands may also cause a fine tremor.



CLINICAL NOTE

Tremor of the hands from Internal Wind: L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, H.E.-5 Tongli, Du.-16 Fengfu, G.B.-20 Fengchi, LIV-3 Taichong.

8. CONTRACTION OF THE FINGERS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Contraction of the fingers with normal movement of the wrist joint and all the joints above it is called Chicken Claw Wind ([Fig. 14.1](#)). The most common cause of this contraction of the fingers is Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency; Dupuytren contracture of the ring or middle finger is a typical example.

Two other causes of contraction of the fingers are Cold in the joints or stagnation of Qi from emotional problems; in the latter case, the contraction of the fingers comes and goes according to the emotional state.

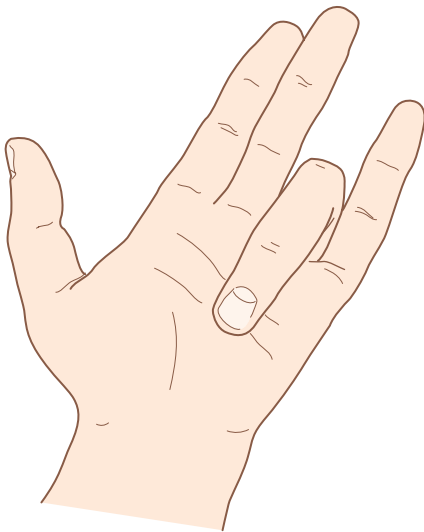


Figure 14.1. Contraction of fingers.

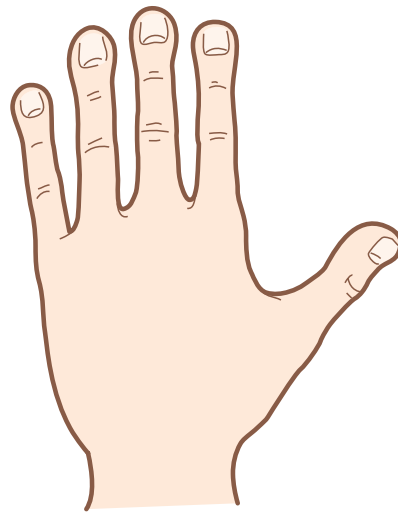


Figure 14.2. Spoon-shaped fingers.

9. SPOON-SHAPED FINGERS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Spoon-shaped fingers ([Fig. 14.2](#)) usually indicate a Lung pathology, which may be Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs, Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs, or Lung and Kidney-Yin deficiency. Spoon-shaped fingers are usually seen only in patients suffering from chronic lung diseases, such as emphysema, tuberculosis (TB) of the lungs, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. In some cases, spoon-shaped fingers may also indicate a Heart pathology.

10. THIN, POINTED FINGERS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Thin, pointed fingers are generally related to the state of the Stomach ([Fig. 14.3](#)) and may indicate Cold-Dampness in the Stomach, Damp-Heat in the Stomach or severe deficiency of Stomach- and Spleen-Qi.

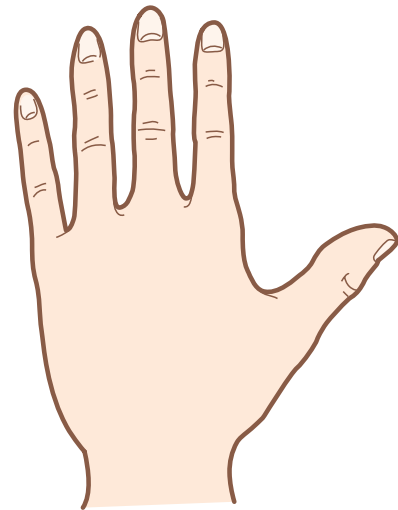


Figure 14.3. Thin, pointed fingers.

include Blood stasis (of the Heart or Liver) or oedema, which, in the case of the hands, is due to deficiency of Yang of the Lungs and Spleen. In the elderly, swollen fingers may also be due to Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Blood-Heat ([Fig. 14.4](#)).

11. SWOLLEN FINGERS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

The most obvious and common cause of swelling of the fingers is Painful Obstruction Syndrome from Dampness, which may be Cold-Dampness, Wind-Dampness or Damp-Heat. Other causes of swelling of the fingers

12. CRACKED FINGERS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Cracked fingers are generally due to Blood deficiency or to Blood stasis. In some cases cracked fingers may also be due to Yang deficiency with Empty Cold.

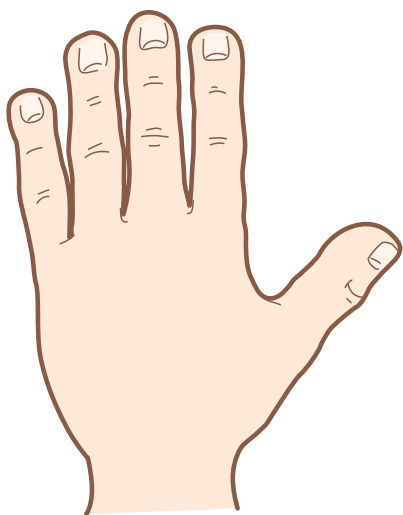


Figure 14.4. Swollen fingers.

13. TINEA (RINGWORM)

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 65 and 77](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

Tinea, a fungal infection of the skin, is characterized by disc-like skin lesions with sharply defined, raised borders that expand peripherally and clear centrally. There may be red scaling with itching as well as vesicles. Continuous scratching may result in lichenification (thickening and hardening of the skin). In Chinese medicine, tinea of the hands is due to an external invasion of Wind-Heat or Damp-Heat.

When tinea affects the nails, in Chinese medicine it is called Goose Claw Wind.

14. THICKENED FINGERS LIKE COCOONS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Thickening of the fingers so that they look like cocoons is due to general deficiency of Qi and Blood.

15. SHRIVELLED AND WRINKLED FINGERS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Shrivelled and wrinkled fingers indicate a severe loss of fluids, such as that which occurs after profuse sweating, vomiting, or diarrhoea.



Figure 14.5. Deformed knuckles.

16. DEFORMED KNUCKLES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Deformed knuckles are seen in the late, chronic stages of Painful Obstruction Syndrome with Phlegm. In chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome, there is a severe disruption of the transformation and movement of the fluids in the joints, which, under the 'steaming' action of Heat, creates Phlegm in the joints. Thus, Phlegm is the central pathogenic factor causing deformed knuckles and may be combined with other conditions such as Heat, Cold, Blood stasis or Qi and/or Yin deficiency ([Fig. 14.5](#)).

17. DRY, CRACKED, PEELING PALMS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Dry, cracked and peeling palms are generally due to Blood deficiency (of the Liver and/or Heart); if the dryness is very pronounced and the hands are also itchy, it indicates Wind in the skin.

18. SWEATY PALMS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Sweating of the palms is related primarily to the Heart and Lung channels and may be due to either deficiency of Qi or Yin or to Heat in one of these two organs.

19. HAND LINES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 65

Changes in the lines of the palms of the hands can indicate certain pathologies.

a) Description of the lines

The main hand lines to be observed are illustrated in Fig. 14.6. The lines are the life line, the head line, the emotions line, the health line and the so-called Jade Pillar. Figure 14.7 illustrates the normal lengths of the emotions line and life line.

b) Description of abnormal signs on the lines

The abnormal signs appearing on the lines may be shaped like stars, crosses, triangles, ovals, squares, hashes, links of a chain, or rope (Fig. 14.8).

c) Diseases indicated on the lines

The diseases indicated on the lines are as follows:

Diseases of the digestive system

- Ulcerative colitis: star-shaped sign on the distal or proximal end of the life line (Fig. 14.9).

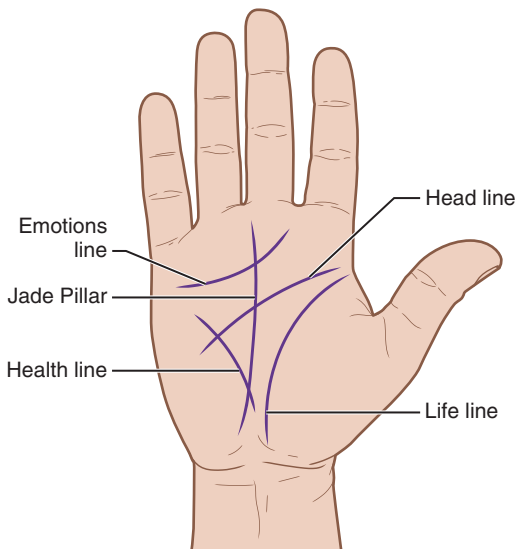


Figure 14.6. Main hand lines.

- Gastritis: star-shaped sign on the proximal end of the life line (Fig. 14.9).

Circulatory diseases

- Hypertension: the emotions line extends radially beyond its natural boundary (Fig. 14.10).
- Coronary heart disease: both the emotions line and the head line are shorter than normal (Fig. 14.11).

Respiratory diseases

- Asthma: oval-shaped signs at either end of the health line (Fig. 14.12).
- TB of the lungs: oval-shaped signs in the middle of the health line (Fig. 14.13).

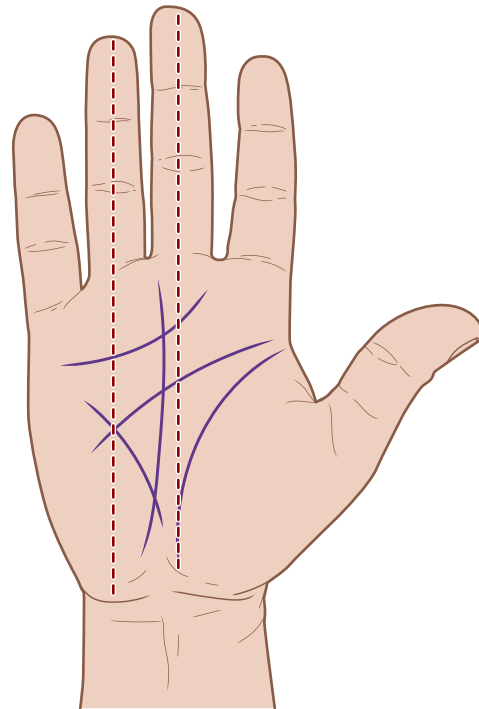


Figure 14.7. Normal length of emotions and life lines.

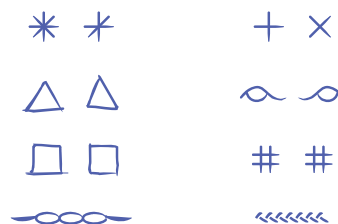


Figure 14.8. Abnormal signs on the lines.

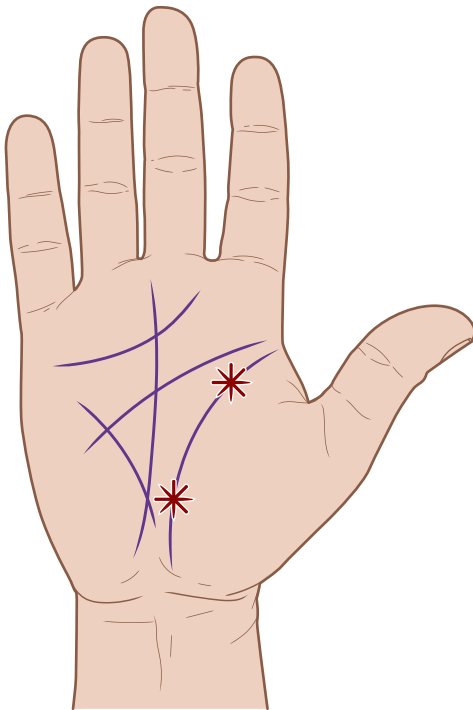


Figure 14.9. Lines showing diseases of digestive system.

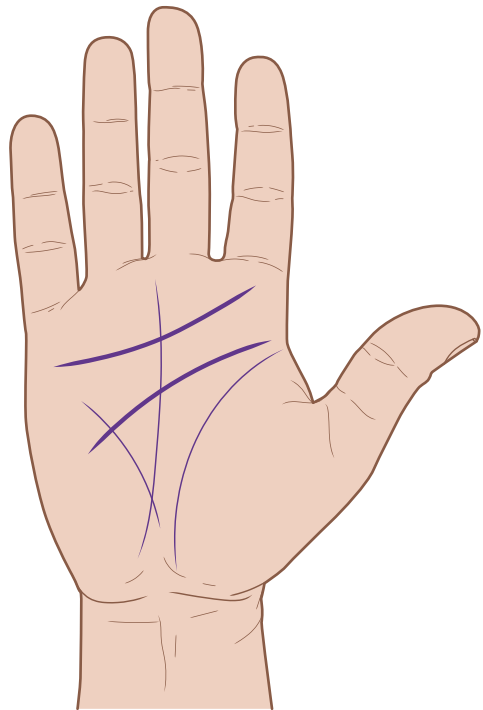


Figure 14.11. Lines showing coronary heart disease.

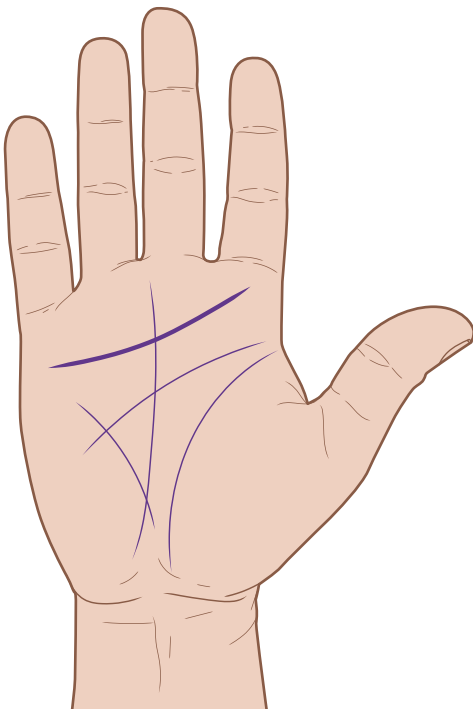


Figure 14.10. Lines showing hypertension.

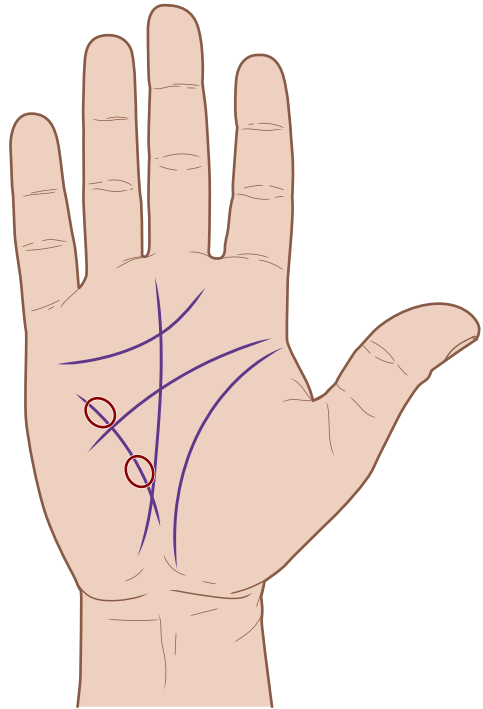


Figure 14.12. Lines in asthma.

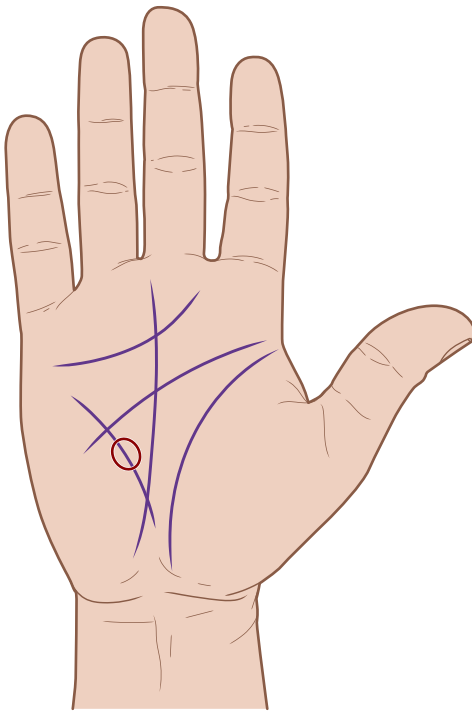


Figure 14.13. Lines in TB of the lungs.

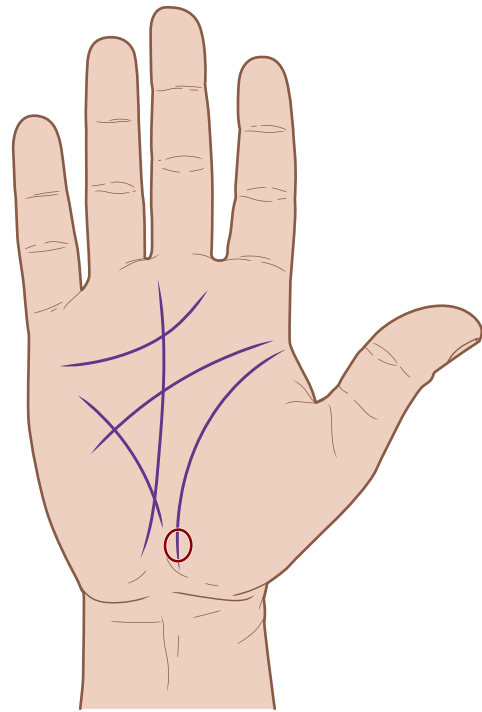


Figure 14.14. Lines in urinary diseases.

Diseases of the urinary system

- Nephritis, urinary infections, prostatitis, prostatic hypertrophy: oval-shaped sign at the proximal end of the life line (Fig. 14.14).

Diseases of the reproductive system

- Endometriosis, salpingitis, myomas, ovarian cysts: arrow-shaped or oval sign at the proximal end of the Jade Pillar (Fig. 14.15).
- Erectile dysfunction, impotence: horizontal chain links near the proximal end of the life line (Fig. 14.16).

Cancer

The life line is broken, is short, or merges with the health line (Figs. 14.17–14.19).



CHAPTER 14 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The importance of hand diagnosis.
- The implication of abnormal hand colour.
- The clinical significance of the appearance of the thenar eminence and the dorsum, a tremor and tinea.
- The clinical significance of finger shapes and cracks, and deformed knuckles.
- The implication of dry or sweaty palms, and abnormal signs on the palm lines.

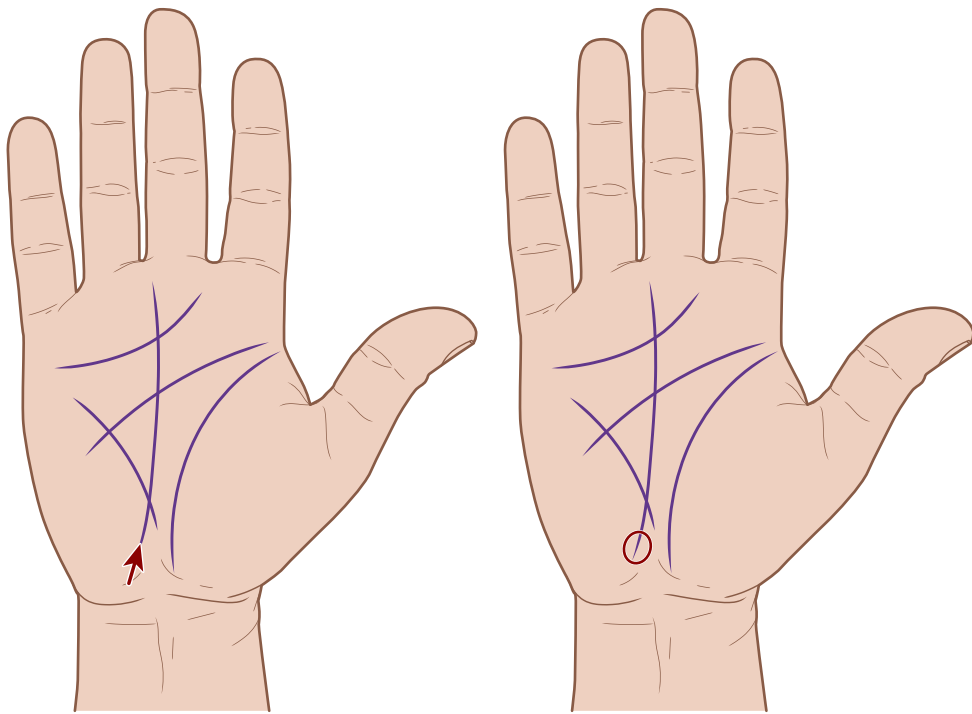


Figure 14.15. Lines in gynaecological diseases.

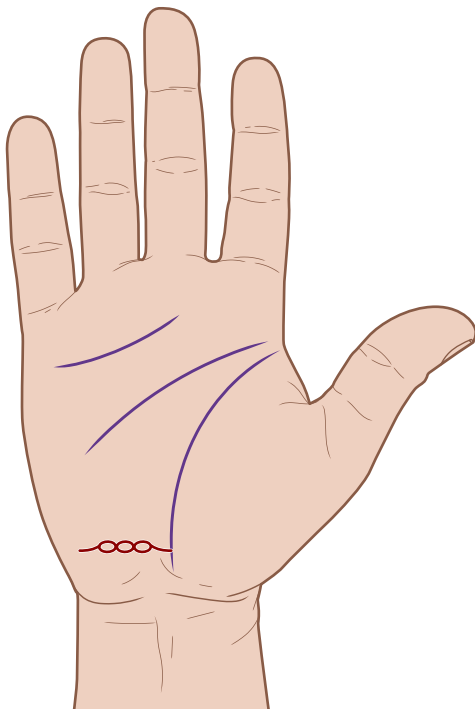


Figure 14.16. Lines in male sexual dysfunctions.

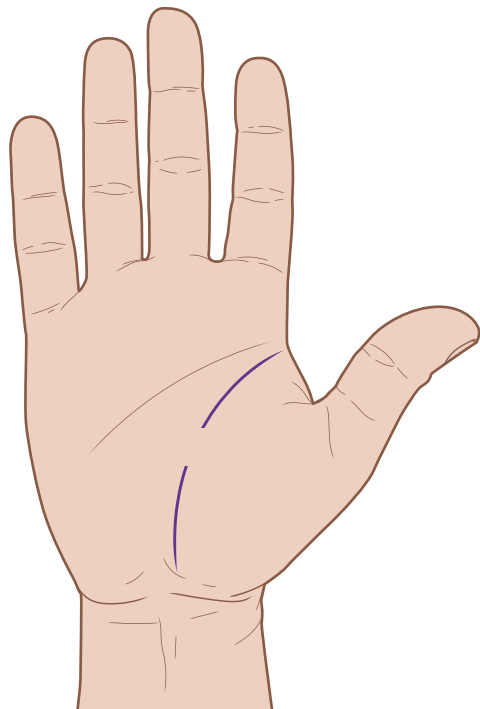


Figure 14.17. Lines in cancer.

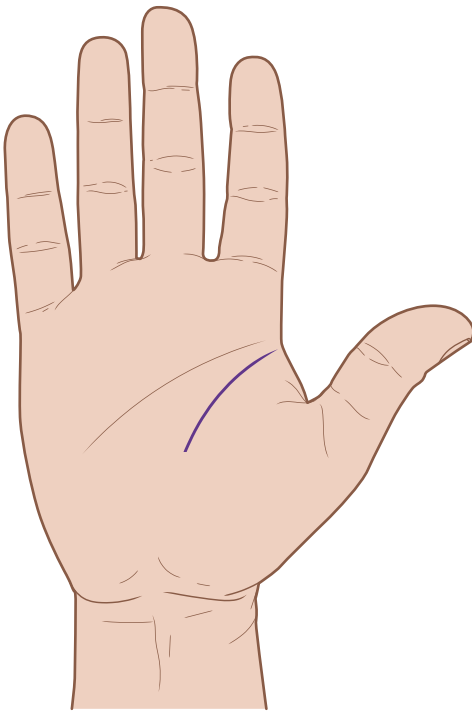


Figure 14.18. Lines in cancer.

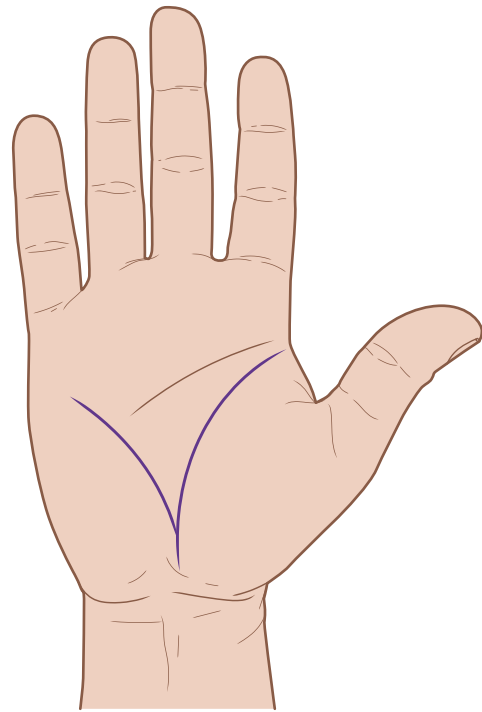


Figure 14.19. Lines in cancer.

END NOTES

1. 1981 *Spiritual Axis (Ling Shu Jing 灵枢经)*, People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 129, p. 37.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

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Observation of the Nails

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Ridged nails**Indented nails****Thin and brittle nails****Thickening of the nails****Coarse and thick nails****Withered and brittle nails****Withered and thickened nails****Cracked nails****Twisted nails****Nails falling off****Nails with white spots****Pale-white nails****Dull-white nails****Red nails****Yellow nails****Bluish-greenish nails****Dark nails****Purple nails****Curling nails****Flaking nails****Lunulae****Correspondence of nails to organ systems***Thumb**Index finger**Middle finger**Ring finger**Little finger*

The following nail signs will be discussed:

1. Ridged nails
2. Indented nails
3. Thin and brittle nails
4. Thickening of the nails
5. Coarse and thick nails
6. Withered and brittle nails
7. Withered and thickened nails
8. Cracked nails
9. Twisted nails
10. Nails falling off
11. Nails with white spots
12. Pale-white nails
13. Dull-white nails
14. Red nails
15. Yellow nails
16. Bluish-greenish nails
17. Dark nails
18. Purple nails
19. Curling nails
20. Flaking nails
21. Lunulae
22. Correspondence of nails to organ systems

For a more detailed description of the nail signs discussed below, please see [Chapter 65](#) in Part 5 on Symptoms and Signs.

1. RIDGED NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Longitudinal ridges in the nails are generally due to Liver-Blood deficiency or Liver-Yin deficiency.



TREATMENT NOTE

LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

The nails are influenced by the Liver (particularly Liver-Blood) and are considered to be the accumulation of the 'excess' of the sinews. Normal nails should be smooth, slightly bulging, slightly convex, relatively thick, and bright. Such nails indicate a good state of the Liver, particularly Liver-Blood.

When observing nails, one should pay attention to their texture and colour. For example, brittle or ridged nails indicate a deficiency of Liver-Blood.

2. INDENTED NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Nails take about 150 to 180 days to grow, and horizontal indentations may appear in the course of a serious disease. From the location of a horizontal indentation, therefore, we can gauge roughly the time of onset of the disease. [Figure 15.1](#) illustrates two nails in section with two indentations corresponding to two different times of onset of a disease, one roughly 120 days, the other approximately 30 days.

In general, apart from indicating the onset of a disease, indentations of the nails may be due to deficiency and dryness of Liver-Blood, general deficiency of Qi and Blood, or Heat-injuring fluids. Moreover, small indentations of the nails are seen in chronic skin diseases, such as eczema and psoriasis, in which case the clinical significance is different, simply indicating chronic Liver-Blood deficiency.

3. THIN AND BRITTLE NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Thin and brittle nails generally indicate Qi and Blood deficiency, particularly Liver-Blood deficiency. In severe cases, they may also indicate a deficiency of Kidney Essence.

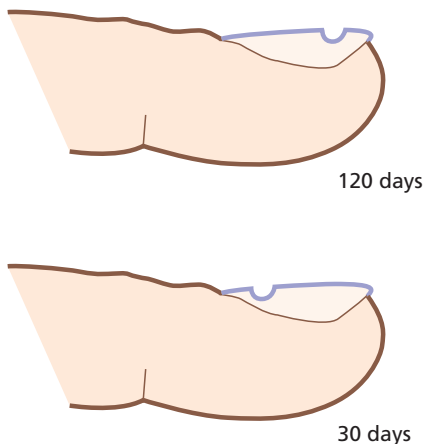


Figure 15.1. Nail indentations showing disease onset at approximately 120 and 30 days.

4. THICKENING OF THE NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Thickening of the nails may be due to Liver-Fire, Liver-Blood stasis, or Phlegm.



TREATMENT NOTE

For Phlegm affecting nails: ST-40 Fenglong, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

5. COARSE AND THICK NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Coarse and thick nails generally indicate Qi and Blood deficiency with Blood dryness generating Wind, which often happens in chronic psoriasis. In some cases, coarse and thick nails may indicate accumulation of Dampness.

6. WITHERED AND BRITTLE NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Withered and brittle nails are generally due to a deficiency of Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin. In some cases, they may also be due to Liver-Blood stasis, in which case the withering of the nails is caused not by a lack of nourishment of Liver-Blood, but by stagnant Liver-Blood being unable to reach the nails.

In some cases, Liver-Fire may cause the nails to become withered and brittle. If the nails are withered and brittle and also scaly, it indicates a severe Kidney deficiency.

Withered and brittle nails in some cases may be due to Phlegm in the joints; this is seen in cases of chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome with Phlegm in patients suffering from rheumatoid arthritis. The withering of the nails observed in psoriasis is usually due to either deficiency and dryness of Liver-Blood or stasis of Liver-Blood.

In acute cases, withered nails may appear in the aftermath of a febrile disease, resulting in Blood- and Yin-deficiency with Blood dryness and Empty Heat.

7. WITHERED AND THICKENED NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Withered and thickened nails are dry, brittle, thicker than normal, irregular, greyish, and lacking lustre. This type of nail is generally due to a severe deficiency of Stomach and Spleen, a deficiency and dryness of Liver-Blood and Liver-Yin, or a combination of Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat.

8. CRACKED NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Cracked nails indicate either a general deficiency of Qi and Blood or a deficiency and dryness of Liver-Blood. In some cases, cracked nails may be caused by Full conditions, especially by Liver-Fire. In the elderly, cracked nails may also be due to Yin deficiency.

9. TWISTED NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Twisted nails are due to a deficiency of Liver-Blood.

10. NAILS FALLING OFF

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

If the nails become swollen, hot, and painful, then produce pus and later fall off, it indicates Toxic Heat, usually affecting the Liver.

11. NAILS WITH WHITE SPOTS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Nails with white spots indicate Qi deficiency.

12. PALE-WHITE NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Pale-white nails are generally due to Blood deficiency of the Liver and Spleen.

13. DULL-WHITE NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Dull-white nails are generally due to Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency or to a sudden loss of body fluids, such as happens in profuse vomiting, diarrhoea or sweating.

14. RED NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Red nails are simply due to Heat, generally to Full Heat, which may be related to any organ.

15. YELLOW NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Yellow nails indicate Damp-Heat, which may be affecting the Stomach and Spleen or Liver and Gall-Bladder. If the colour is fresh yellow, it is a favourable sign: either the Damp-Heat is not serious or it is receding. If it is a dull and dark yellow, the Damp-Heat is serious or is advancing.

16. BLUISH-GREENISH NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Bluish nails indicate Blood deficiency with internal Cold, whereas greenish nails (generally seen only in children's diseases) indicate severe Spleen-Qi deficiency with internal Wind. Bluish-greenish nails may also be due to Blood stasis.

17. DARK NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Dark nails generally indicate either a Kidney deficiency, which may be of Yin or Yang, or Blood stasis.

18. PURPLE NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Purple nails generally indicate Blood stasis of the Liver. If the nails are reddish-purple in febrile diseases, it indicates Heat at the Blood level.



TREATMENT NOTE

For Liver-Blood stasis: SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan, LIV-3 Taichong, SP-10 Xuehai, BL-17 Geshu.

19. CURLING NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Nails may curl either down or up, like hooks, and the curling always indicates a chronic condition with Qi and Blood deficiency combined with Blood stasis.

20. FLAKING NAILS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Scaly, flaky nails indicate a Kidney and Spleen deficiency with retention of Dampness.

21. LUNULAE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

The lunulae are the white 'crescents' visible at the base of the nails. Generally speaking, their visible presence on the thumb and fingers indicates good health; according to some doctors, the little finger does not normally have a lunula.

Generally speaking, the nail bed (being red) reflects the state of Yang-Qi, whereas the lunula, being white, reflects the state of Yin and Essence. In men, the lunula of the thumb should be roughly 3 mm wide, decreasing proportionately on the index, middle, and ring fingers and usually not showing at all on the little finger. In women, the lunulae are generally smaller than in men.

The less visible the lunulae, the poorer is the health of the individual. Conversely, excessively large lunulae indicate a tendency to excess of Yang and deficiency of Yin. If the lunulae dwindle and disappear from sight, this indicates internal Cold or Yang deficiency.

The lunula of the thumb corresponds to the Lungs, that of the index finger to the Heart, that of the middle finger to the Spleen, that of the ring finger to the Liver, and that of the little finger to the Kidneys (if it shows at all); the lunula of a particular finger shows a Full condition of its relevant organ if it is too large or an Empty condition if it is too small ([Fig. 15.2](#)).

22. CORRESPONDENCE OF NAILS TO ORGAN SYSTEMS

The nails of individual fingers correspond to the state of various organs; however, the correspondence is not always related to the channel of that particular finger.

a) Thumb

The thumbnail reflects diseases of the head, including the brain, eyes, ears, nose, throat, and mouth. [Figure 15.3](#) shows the areas of the thumbnail that correspond to the above.

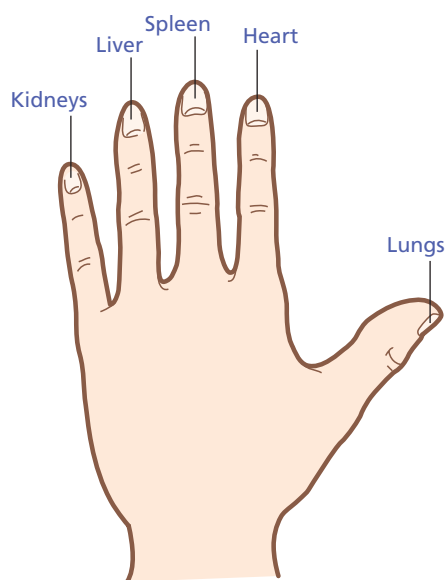


Figure 15.2. Correspondence of lunulae to organs.

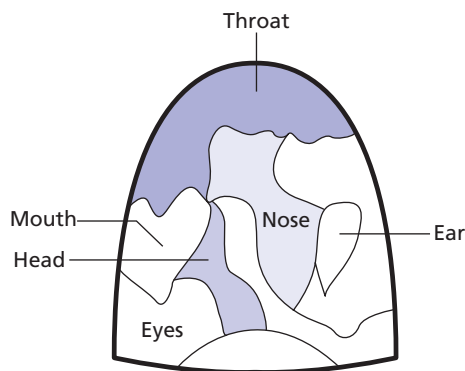


Figure 15.3. Correspondence of thumbnail areas to organs.

b) Index finger

The nail of the index finger reflects diseases of the Upper and Middle Burners, including oesophagus, chest, breast, lungs, heart, upper back, shoulder, and throat. The areas vary between the right and left index fingers (Fig. 15.4).

c) Middle finger

The nail of the middle finger reflects diseases of the Middle and Lower Burner. The nail of the right index finger reflects diseases of the stomach, duodenum,

diaphragm, liver, pancreas, kidneys, and large intestine. The nail of the left index finger reflects diseases of the same organs but also includes the heart (Fig. 15.5).

d) Ring finger

The nail of the ring finger reflects diseases of the Middle and Lower Burner. That on the right hand reflects disease of the liver, gall-bladder, pancreas, kidneys, small intestine, large intestine, bladder, and reproductive system. That on the left hand reflects diseases of the spleen, pancreas, uterus, urinary passages, fallopian tubes, external genitalia, and anus (Fig. 15.6).

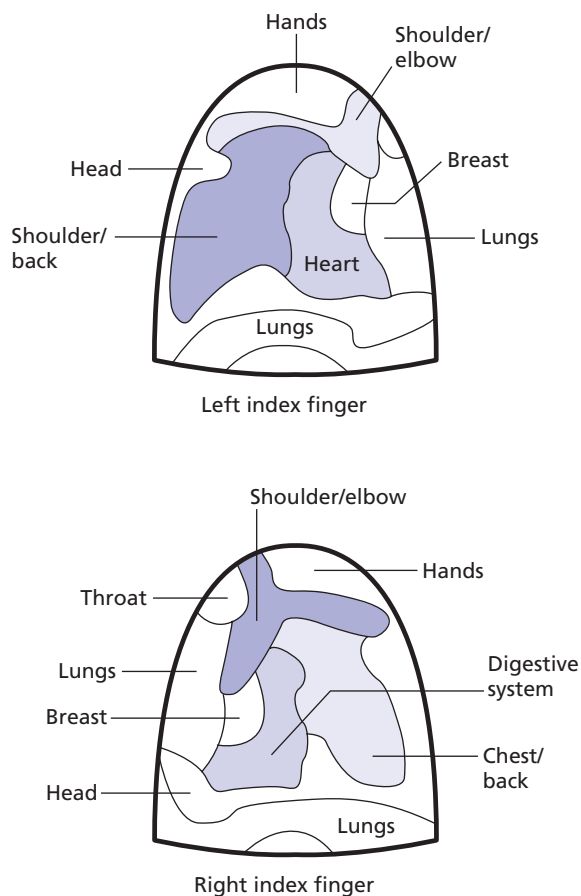


Figure 15.4. Correspondence of nail of index finger to organs.

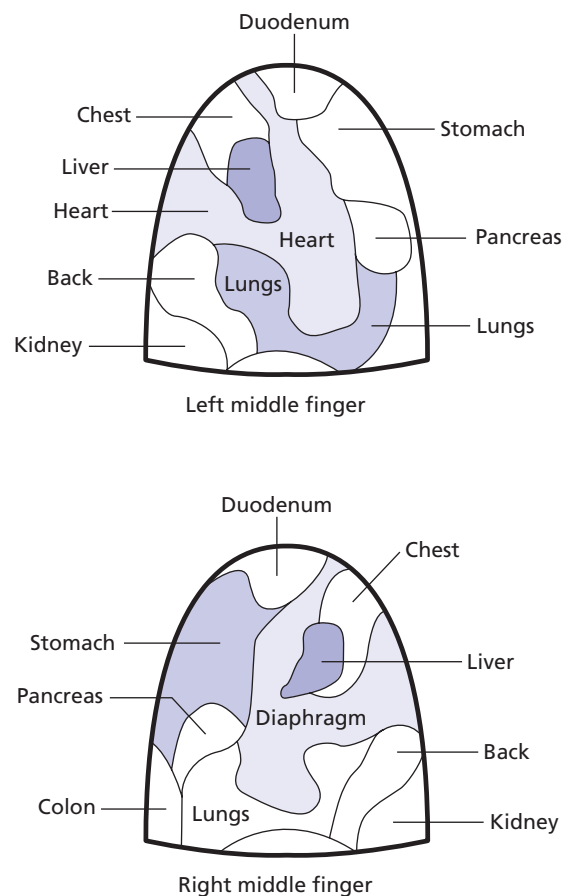


Figure 15.5. Correspondence of nail of middle finger to organs.

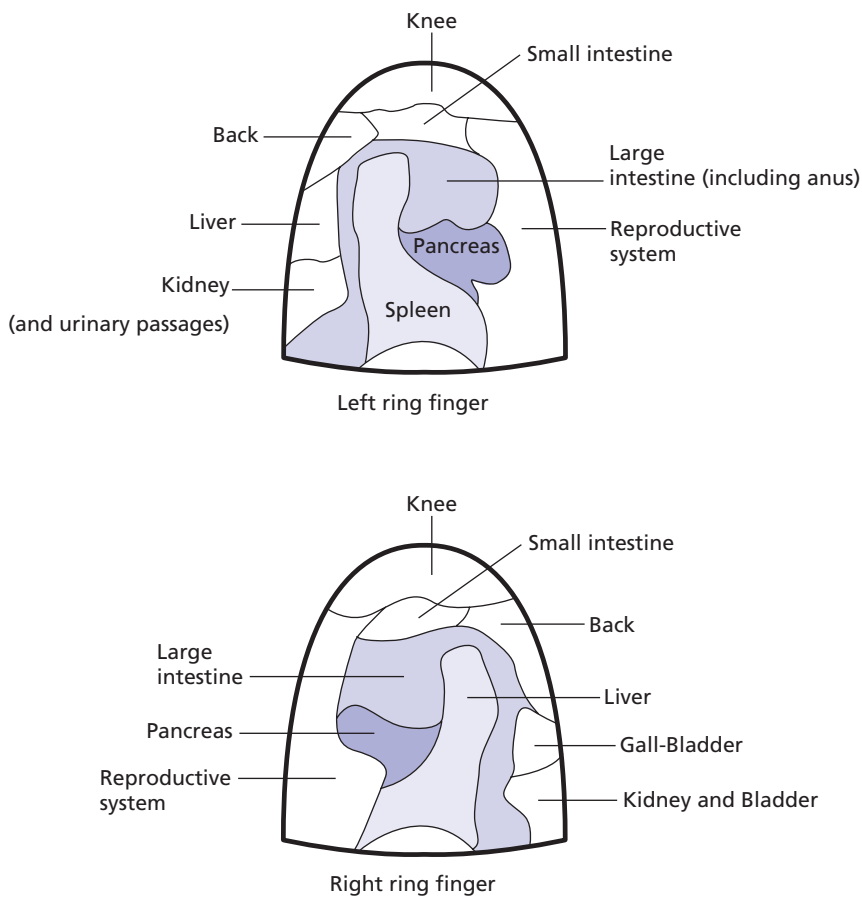


Figure 15.6. Correspondence of nail of ring finger to organs.

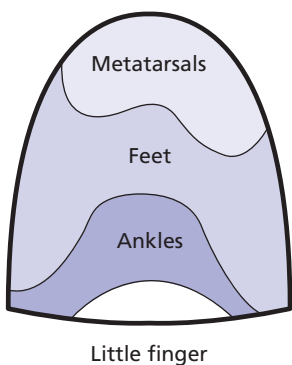


Figure 15.7. Correspondence of nail of little finger to the parts of the body.

e) Little finger

The nail of the little finger reflects diseases of the ankles, feet, and metatarsal bones (Fig. 15.7).



CHAPTER 15 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The role of the Liver in nail health.
- The implications of nail surface abnormalities.
- The causes of twisted, curling nails and of those falling off.
- The implications of abnormal nail colours and the health of the lunulae.
- The body areas reflected in individual fingernails.

16

Observation of the Chest and Abdomen

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Chest*Protruding chest**Sunken chest**Protruding sternum**Chest sunken on one side**Chest protruding on one side**Gynaecomastia***Abdomen***Abdominal distension**Thin abdomen**Large abdomen**Sagging lower abdomen**Lumps in the epigastrium**Abdominal masses**Oedema of the abdomen**Protruding umbilicus**Sunken umbilicus**Distended abdominal veins**Lines on the abdomen**Maculae on the abdomen**Small hypochondrial lumps*

The chest signs discussed are as follows:

- a) Protruding chest
- b) Sunken chest
- c) Protruding sternum
- d) Chest sunken on one side
- e) Chest protruding on one side
- f) Gynaecomastia

a) Protruding chest

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

The most common cause of a protruding chest is chronic retention of Phlegm in the Lungs. Other causes include severe, chronic Liver-Qi stagnation or Blood stasis in the chest ([Fig. 16.2](#)).

**TREATMENT NOTE**

Phlegm in the Lungs: LU-7 Lieque, ST-40 Fenglong, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen.

1. CHEST

The front of the chest is influenced by the Lung and Heart channel and by the Directing and Penetrating Vessels; the sides of the chest are influenced by the Gall-Bladder and Liver channels ([Fig. 16.1](#)).

For a more detailed description of the patterns causing chest signs, see Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#).

CHANNELS INFLUENCING THE CHEST

- Lungs
- Heart
- Directing Vessel
- Penetrating Vessel
- Gall-Bladder (sides of chest)
- Liver (sides of chest)

b) Sunken chest

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

The most common cause of a sunken chest is a deficiency of Qi or Yin of the Lungs. A Kidney deficiency may also cause a sunken chest ([Fig. 16.3](#)).

c) Protruding sternum

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

The protruding sternum is either hereditary, in which case it is due to a constitutional deficiency of the Lungs and Kidneys, or it is caused by retention of Phlegm in the Lungs ([Fig. 16.4](#)).

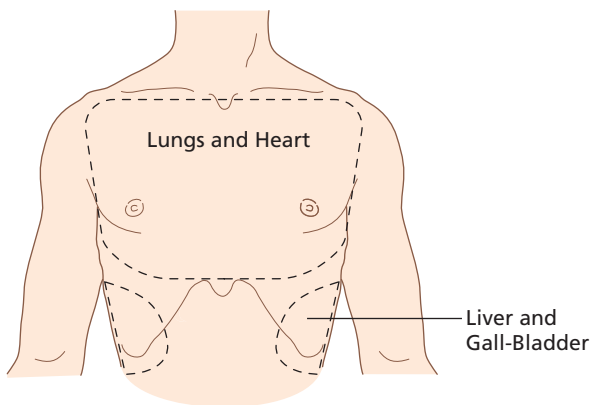


Figure 16.1. Chest areas.

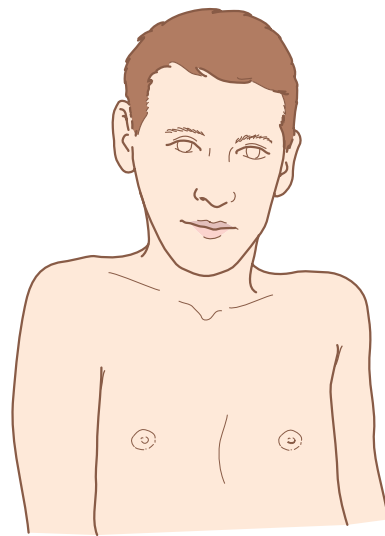


Figure 16.3. Sunken chest.

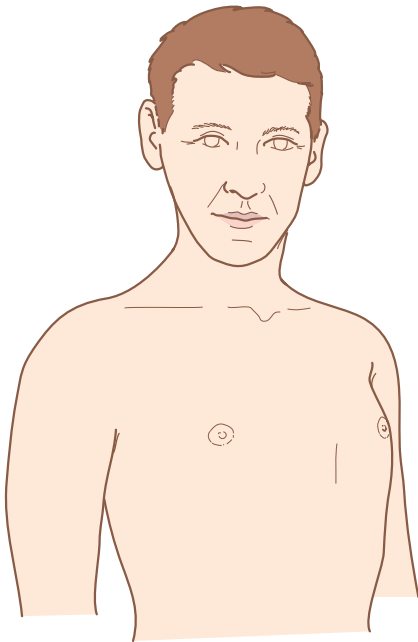


Figure 16.2. Protruding chest.

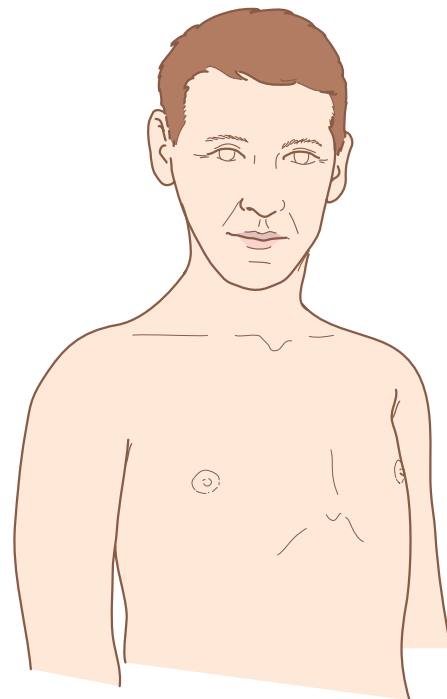


Figure 16.4. Protruding sternum.

d) Chest sunken on one side

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

The chest can become sunken on one side either because of a deficiency of the Lungs, specifically affecting one lung, or because of retention of Phlegm-Fluids, often with Blood stasis ([Fig. 16.5](#)).

e) Chest protruding on one side

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

The chest can become protruding on one side from Phlegm-Fluids in the Lungs, severe Liver-Qi stagnation, or Heart-Qi deficiency with Blood stasis ([Fig. 16.6](#)).

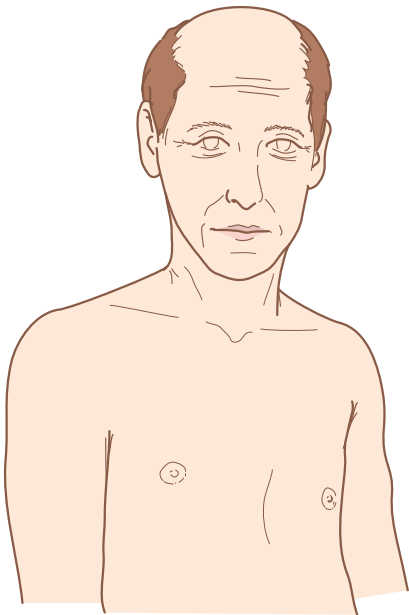


Figure 16.5. Chest sunken on one side.

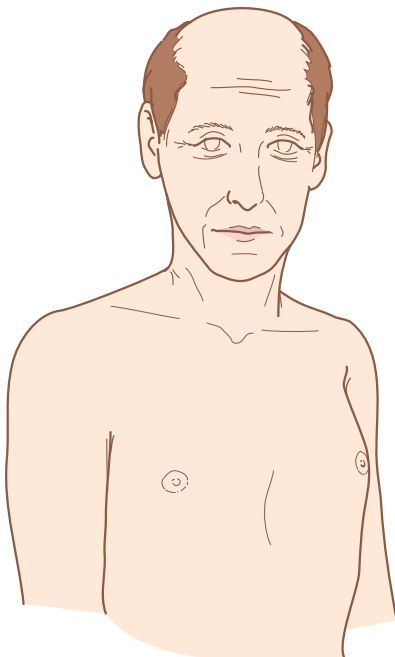


Figure 16.6. Chest protruding on one side.

f) Gynaecomastia

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

Gynaecomastia indicates a swelling of the breast in males. It may be due to either Liver-Blood stasis or Damp-Heat in the Penetrating Vessel.

2. ABDOMEN

The regions of the abdomen in Chinese medicine are as follows ([Fig. 16.7](#)):

The area under the heart is the small area immediately below the xyphoid process, extending approximately 2 inches (5 cm) and bordered by the ribs. It is influenced both by the Heart and the Stomach channels and by the Penetrating Vessel.

The epigastrium is the area between the xyphoid process and the umbilicus but excluding the hypochondrial area. It is related to the Stomach and Spleen channels.

The hypochondrium includes the two areas below the rib cage and its edges, which are influenced by the Liver and Gall-Bladder channels.

The area around the umbilicus is influenced by the Spleen, Liver, Kidney, and Small Intestine channels.

The central-lower abdominal area (*xiao fu*) is between the umbilicus and the symphysis pubis. This area is influenced by the Liver, Kidney, Bladder, and Large Intestine channels and by the Directing Vessel; in women, it is also influenced by the Uterus.

The lateral-lower abdominal areas (*shao fu*) are influenced by the Liver and Large Intestine channels and by the Penetrating Vessel.

Observation of the abdomen is an important part of observation in the clinic and one that should always be carried out in conjunction with palpation of the abdomen. In particular, observation of the abdomen is important because the epigastrium reflects the state of Stomach and Spleen (the Root of Post-Natal Qi) and the lower abdomen that of the Kidneys (the Root of Pre-Natal Qi).

The following abdominal signs will be discussed:

- Abdominal distension
- Thin abdomen
- Large abdomen
- Sagging lower abdomen
- Lumps in the epigastrium

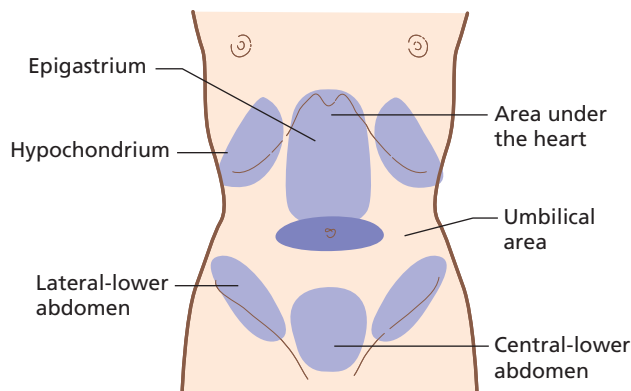


Figure 16.7. Abdominal areas

- f) Abdominal masses
- g) Oedema of the abdomen
- h) Protruding umbilicus
- i) Sunken umbilicus
- j) Distended abdominal veins
- k) Lines on the abdomen
- l) Maculae on the abdomen
- m) Small hypochondrial lumps

For a more detailed discussion of the patterns involved in abdominal signs, please see Part 5 of Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#).

a) Abdominal distension

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

Abdominal distension is both a symptom and a sign; that is, it is a subjective feeling of bloating but also an objective, distended feeling of the abdomen, like a drum on palpation. The distended abdomen looks swollen, and on palpation it is hard but relatively elastic, like an inflated balloon. In severe cases, the whole abdomen can be distended, like a ball or a frog's belly.

By far the most common cause of abdominal distension is Qi stagnation, usually related to the Liver, Spleen, or the Intestines. Liver-Qi stagnation is the most common cause of abdominal distension, which may involve both the epigastrium and the lower abdomen.

Stagnation of Qi in the Intestines will also cause abdominal distension, and in this case there will be other symptoms, such as loose stools or constipation. Spleen-Qi deficiency may cause slight abdominal distension.

In severe cases, when the whole abdomen may look like a ball or a frog's belly, this may be due to Damp-Phlegm in the Lower Burner or oedema of the abdomen.



TREATMENT NOTE

Ren-6 Qihai, ST-25 Tianshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-39 Xijajuxu, LIV-3 Taichong.

b) Thin abdomen

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

A thin and emaciated abdomen may indicate a severe deficiency of Qi and Blood, often seen in serious diseases such as cancer; however, it may also simply indicate the condition of Yin deficiency. When observing the abdomen, make allowance for the Element type body structure; for example, a thin abdomen is relatively normal in a Metal type but not in an Earth type.

c) Large abdomen

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

A large, fat abdomen indicates Phlegm occurring against a background of Spleen deficiency. Again, allowance should be made for the Element type body structure; for example, a large abdomen is relatively normal in an Earth type but not in a Metal type.

d) Sagging lower abdomen

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

The sagging abdomen is usually seen in obese people; it is swollen but soft and hangs down. If not due to obesity, the sagging abdomen is usually seen only in the elderly; it may be due to Damp-Phlegm in the lower abdomen or to a severe deficiency of Spleen- and Kidney-Yang associated with Damp-Phlegm.

A sagging abdomen always involves a deficiency of the Directing and Penetrating Vessels and a slackening of the Membranes (*Huang*) and the Ancestral Muscle (*Zong Jin*), which are controlled by the Penetrating Vessel.

e) Lumps in the epigastrium

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

Visible epigastric lumps are usually due to Damp-Phlegm, Blood stasis, or Phlegm and Blood stasis in the Middle Burner. Obviously, when a lump is visible on observation (rather than palpation), it is quite advanced and is seen in serious diseases, such as stomach cancer, liver cancer, cancer of the oesophagus, or enlargement of the liver or spleen.

f) Abdominal masses

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 71](#) and [89](#)

Abdominal masses are called *Ji Ju*. *Ji* indicates actual abdominal masses that are fixed and immovable; if there is an associated pain, its location is fixed. These masses are due to stasis of Blood, and I call them 'Blood masses'. *Ju* indicates abdominal masses that come and go, do not have a fixed location, and are movable. If there is an associated pain, it, too, comes and goes and changes location. Such masses are due to stagnation of Qi, and I call them 'Qi masses'.

Actual abdominal lumps, therefore, belong to the category of abdominal masses, specifically *Ji* masses, or Blood masses.

Another name for abdominal masses was *Zheng Jia*. *Zheng* is equivalent to *Ji* (i.e., acute, fixed masses), and *Jia* is equivalent to *Ju* (i.e., non-substantial masses from stagnation of Qi). The term *Zheng Jia* normally referred to abdominal masses occurring only in women; but although these masses are more frequent in women, they also occur in men.

Visible lumps in the lower abdomen are usually due to Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Damp-Phlegm, or Damp-Heat in the lower abdomen. As in the case of epigastric lumps, abdominal lumps visible on observation indicate an advanced stage that is usually seen in cancer of the uterus, large ovarian cysts, or large myomas.

If due to Qi stagnation, abdominal lumps normally feel soft and come and go according to emotional moods; if due to Blood stasis, they feel hard on palpation and are usually associated with pain; if from Damp-Heat, they may also be painful and, when palpated, very tender;

if abdominal lumps are from Damp-Phlegm, they feel softer than lumps from Blood stasis or Damp-Heat. A typical example of an abdominal lump from Blood stasis is a myoma, whereas an example of a lump from Damp-Phlegm or Damp-Heat is an ovarian cyst.

TWO TYPES OF ABDOMINAL MASSES

- Qi (*Ju* or *Jia*): relatively soft masses that come and go
- Blood (*Ji* or *Zheng*): hard, fixed masses

g) Oedema of the abdomen

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

Oedema of the abdomen is always due to a deficiency of Yang, which may be of the Spleen or of the Kidneys (in the latter case, the ankles also will be swollen).

h) Protruding umbilicus

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

A protruding umbilicus may be due to Empty-Cold with Qi stagnation, to Blood stasis with oedema in the abdomen, or to severe Spleen and Kidney deficiency. Empty-Cold with Qi stagnation is seen more frequently in children, whereas the pattern of Blood stasis with oedema is seen more frequently in the elderly.

i) Sunken umbilicus

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

A sunken umbilicus may be due to Blood stasis with sinking of Qi or to Damp-Heat in the abdomen.

j) Distended abdominal veins

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

From a Chinese perspective, distended abdominal veins represent the Blood Connecting channels, which are a network of secondary Connecting channels where the blood pools. Thus, by definition, visible distended veins in the abdomen indicate a pathology of the Blood Connecting channels and, being in the abdomen, a pathology of the Penetrating Vessel. The Penetrating Vessel is the Sea of Blood and controls all the Blood Connecting channels, in particular those of the abdomen, and of the medial sides of the legs. If the distended veins are purple, they indicate Blood stasis; if red, Blood Heat; and if bluish, Cold.

k) Lines on the abdomen

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

Lines on the abdomen are wide streaks that look like stretch marks (indeed, stretch marks are one type of such 'lines'). They may be blue or purple, blue indicating Blood stasis from Cold associated with Yang deficiency, and purple indicating Blood stasis with Blood Heat associated with Yin deficiency. Such lines are frequently seen in patients who have been on oral corticosteroids for a long time.

l) Maculae on the abdomen

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

Maculae on the abdomen always indicate a Blood pathology, which is Blood-Heat if they are red, Blood stasis if

they are purple, and Blood-Heat with Yin deficiency if they are scarlet red.

m) Small hypochondrial lumps

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

Small hypochondrial lumps resembling a string of pearls indicate Liver-Blood stasis.



CHAPTER 16 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The channels influencing the chest and abdomen.
- The implications of different appearances of the chest.
- The implications of abdominal size, masses, skin signs, and umbilical signs.

17

Observation of the Genitalia

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Pubic hair*Loss of pubic hair**Excessive pubic hair***Scrotum***Contracted scrotum**Loose scrotum**Scrotum drooping on one side**Swollen scrotum**Swollen and oozing scrotum**Pale scrotum**Red scrotum**Purple scrotum**Dark scrotum***Penis***Redness and swelling of the glans penis**Ulcers on the penis**Peyronie's disease**Priapism**Soft and withered penis**Long penis in children***Vulva and vagina***Vulvar sores**Leukoplakia**Swelling of the vulva**Prolapse of the vagina*

The genitals are related primarily to the Liver and Kidney channels and to the Directing, Penetrating, and Governing Vessels. The Liver Connecting channel, in particular, loops around the genitalia. Although the influence of the Directing Vessel on the genitalia is obvious, that of the Governing Vessel is often overlooked.

The 'Simple Questions' (Chapter 60) describes an anterior branch of the Governing Vessel that flows to the external genitalia both in men and women, and to the pubic bone and from here ascends up the abdomen on the same trajectory as the Directing Vessel.¹

The pathways of the channels flowing through the genitalia are as follows (Fig. 17.1):

- A branch of the Governing Vessels flows down to the genitalia.
- The Kidney Main, Connecting, and Muscle channels flow through the genitalia.
- The Liver Main, Connecting, Divergent, and Muscle channels wrap around the genitalia.

The genitalia signs involve the pubic hair, scrotum, penis, vulva, and vagina, and they are the following:

- Pubic hair
- Scrotum
- Penis
- Vulva and vagina

For a more detailed description of the patterns involved in the above genitalia signs, see Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapters 74, 75, and 89.

1. PUBIC HAIR

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapters 75 and 89

The two items of observation regarding pubic hair are loss of pubic hair and excessive pubic hair.

a) Loss of pubic hair

Loss of pubic hair may be due to a decline of Kidney Essence. This decline is normal in the elderly; in younger people, it may result from a severe Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency.



TREATMENT NOTE

Kidney-Essence deficiency: Ren-4 Guayuan, KI-13 Qixue, BL-23 Shenshu.

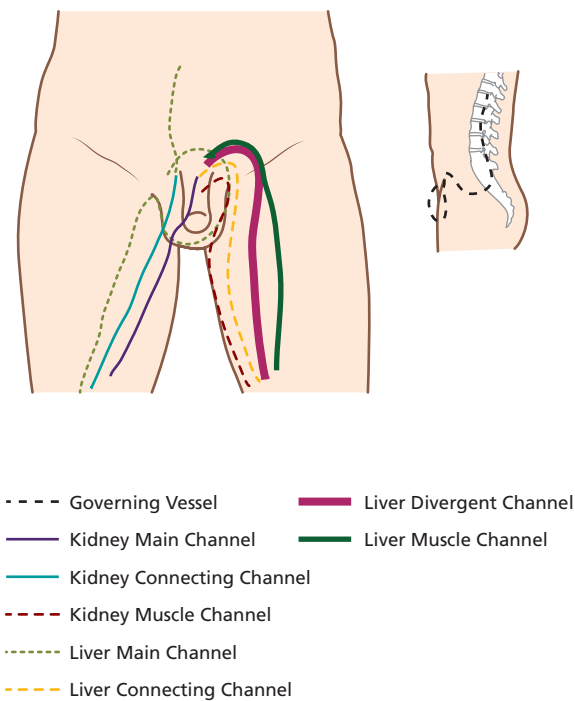


Figure 17.1. Channels flowing through the genitals.

b) Excessive pubic hair

The term ‘excessive’ here indicates not so much the quantity as the extent of pubic hair; it refers to people whose pubic hair occupies a large area, extending down the legs and up towards the umbilicus. Excessive pubic hair, so defined, may be due to either Phlegm combined with Blood stasis or Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat.

2. SCROTUM

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 75](#)

The following scrotum signs will be discussed:

- a) Contracted scrotum
- b) Loose scrotum
- c) Scrotum drooping on one side
- d) Swollen scrotum
- e) Swollen and oozing scrotum
- f) Pale scrotum
- g) Red scrotum
- h) Purple scrotum
- i) Dark scrotum

a) Contracted scrotum

The most common cause of contracted scrotum is stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel. It may also be seen in collapse of Yin or Yang.

b) Loose scrotum

A loose scrotum is due either to a deficiency of the Liver and Kidneys (usually Yang deficiency) or to sinking of Spleen-Qi.

c) Scrotum drooping on one side

A scrotum drooping on one side indicates a condition in which one side of the scrotum is swollen when the male stands up but retracted when he is lying down; in Western medicine, this indicates an inguinal hernia. From a Chinese perspective, the patterns involved in this condition are Empty-Cold in the lower abdomen, Damp-Phlegm in the lower abdomen, Liver-Blood stasis, or Damp-Heat in the Liver.

d) Swollen scrotum

A swollen scrotum may be due to Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency, Damp-Heat in the Liver channel, sinking of Spleen-Qi, Heart-Yang deficiency, or Liver-Blood deficiency generating Empty Internal Wind.

e) Swollen and oozing scrotum

If the scrotum is swollen, red, and oozing a sticky fluid, this condition is due either to Damp-Heat or to Toxic Heat in the Liver channel.

f) Pale scrotum

A pale scrotum is due either to Spleen- or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

g) Red scrotum

A red scrotum is due either to Damp-Heat or Toxic Heat in the Liver channel.

h) Purple scrotum

A purple scrotum is due either to Liver-Blood stasis or Damp-Heat with Blood stasis in the Liver channel.

i) Dark scrotum

A dark scrotum is due either to stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel or to Kidney-Yang deficiency.

3. PENIS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 75](#)

The following penis signs will be discussed:

- a) Redness and swelling of the glans penis
- b) Ulcers on the penis
- c) Peyronie's disease
- d) Priapism
- e) Soft and withered penis
- f) Long penis in children

a) Redness and swelling of the glans penis

Redness and swelling of the glans penis may be due either to Toxic Heat or to Damp-Heat in the Liver channel.



TREATMENT NOTE

Damp-Heat in Liver channel: LIV-5 Ligou, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-3 Zhongji, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

b) Ulcers on the penis

This condition is characterized by redness, macular spots, erosion, and oozing ulcers on the glans penis and/or the shaft. This is usually accompanied also by pain. The main causes of this condition are either Toxic Heat or Damp-Heat in the Liver channel.

c) Peyronie's disease

Peyronie's disease is an unnatural curvature of the penis, noticeable during an erection. It is a connective tissue disorder involving the growth of fibrous plaques in the soft tissue of the penis. It may prevent a complete erection due to plaque or scar tissue inside the penis, or it may render erection painful so that intercourse is impossible.

The most common causes of Peyronie's disease are:

- Blood stasis
- Dampness in the Liver channel
- Cold in the Liver channel



TREATMENT NOTE

Blood stasis affecting the penis: SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan, KI-14 Siman, LIV-3 Taichong, ST-30 Qichong, KI-11 Henggu.

d) Priapism

Priapism is due either to a deficiency of Kidney-Yin with Empty Heat or to Damp-Heat in the Liver channel.

e) Soft and withered penis

A soft and withered penis in adults may be due to Liver-Qi deficiency, Kidney deficiency (either Yin or Yang), or to Phlegm and Blood stasis in the Lower Burner.

f) Long penis in children

If a child's penis is abnormally long, almost the size of an adult's, this condition may be due to a hereditary Kidney-Yin deficiency, to sinking of Spleen-Qi, Phlegm with Blood stasis in the Lower Burner, or Damp-Heat in the Liver channel.

4. VULVA AND VAGINA

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 89](#)

The following signs of the vulva and vagina will be discussed:

- a) Vulvar sores
- b) Leukoplakia
- c) Swelling of the vulva
- d) Prolapse of the vagina

a) Vulvar sores

Vulvar sores may be due to Damp-Heat in the Liver channel or Toxic Heat with Blood stasis in the Liver channel.

b) Leukoplakia

Leukoplakia may be due to Damp-Heat in the Liver channel or to long-standing Blood deficiency accompanied by Dampness.

c) Swelling of the vulva

Swelling of the vulva may be due to Toxic Heat with Blood stasis in the Liver channel, Damp-Phlegm in the Lower Burner, or Damp-Heat and Toxic Heat in the Liver channel.

d) Prolapse of the vagina

Prolapse of the vagina is always due to sinking of Qi, which may be that of the Spleen and/or Kidneys.

END NOTE

1. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 320.



CHAPTER 17 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The channels influencing the genitalia.
- The implications of loss of and excessive pubic hair.
- The pathology underlying abnormalities of the penis and scrotum.
- The pathology underlying abnormalities of the vulva and vagina.

18

Observation of the Four Limbs

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Atrophy of the four limbs
Flaccidity of the four limbs
Rigidity of the four limbs
Paralysis of the four limbs
Contraction of the four limbs
Convulsions of the four limbs
Tremor or spasticity of the four limbs
Swelling of the joints of the four limbs
Oedema of the four limbs

Observation of the limbs includes observation of their skin, muscles, blood vessels, and sinews. Therefore, although the overall condition of the limbs is related to the Stomach and Spleen, observation of the skin, muscles, sinews, and blood vessels can reveal the state of the Lungs, Spleen, Liver, and Heart, respectively.

Observation of the four limbs will be discussed under the following headings:

1. Atrophy of the four limbs
2. Flaccidity of the four limbs
3. Rigidity of the four limbs
4. Paralysis of the four limbs
5. Contraction of the four limbs
6. Convulsions of the four limbs
7. Tremor or spasticity of the four limbs
8. Swelling of the joints of the four limbs
9. Oedema of the four limbs

The symptoms and signs relative to the four limbs are presented in Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64, 65, and 66](#).

1. ATROPHY OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

Atrophy of the four limbs may range from a very slight thinning of the muscles to a complete wasting of the

muscles, such as is seen in the advanced stage of some neurological problems (e.g., motor neurone disease). The most common cause of atrophy of the limb muscles is a deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen, which results because the Stomach fails to transport the food essences there. Another possible cause of atrophy of the four limbs, which usually involves the Heart, Spleen, and Liver, is Qi and Blood deficiency. In more advanced stages, atrophy of the four limbs may be caused by Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency or Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency.

In children, atrophy of the four limbs is due either to a deficiency of Stomach and Spleen or to a congenital Kidney-Essence deficiency; it is one of the Five Flaccidities seen in children. The Chinese name for the condition that causes a child to have flaccid leg muscles and swollen knees is Crane Knee Wind, which is due to a deficiency of Yin of the three leg channels combined with invasion of Damp-Cold in the knees.

ATROPHY OF THE FOUR LIMBS

- Stomach and Spleen deficiency
- Qi and Blood deficiency
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Kidney-Essence deficiency (children)
- Deficiency of Yin of the Spleen, Liver, and Kidneys, with Damp-Cold in the knees (children)

2. FLACCIDITY OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

The term 'flaccidity' indicates that the muscles are flaccid, soft, and limp but not atrophied (as in atrophy of the muscles).

In acute cases, flaccidity of the four limbs may be due to invasion of Wind-Heat in the Lungs, which later becomes interior Heat, injuring the body fluids of the

Stomach and Spleen. In chronic cases, the flaccidity may result from Damp-Heat affecting the Stomach and Spleen (Full cases) or from a deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen (Empty conditions). In severe, chronic cases, flaccidity of the four limbs is often due to a deficiency of Kidney-Yin.

In children under age 5, acute cases of flaccidity of the four limbs are due to an invasion of Wind-Heat that quickly progresses to the Interior, turns into interior Heat, and damages the body fluids, which leads to malnourishment of the channels: this is the pathology of limb flaccidity caused by infectious diseases such as poliomyelitis. In interior conditions, flaccidity of the four limbs in children is due to retention of Damp-Heat or to Qi deficiency with Blood stasis occurring against a background either of poor hereditary constitution or of poor post-natal nutrition.



TREATMENT NOTE

L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, ST-31 Biguan.

FLACCIDITY OF THE LIMBS

- Lung-Heat injuring body fluids (acute)
- Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen
- Stomach and Spleen deficiency
- Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Qi deficiency with Blood stasis

3. RIGIDITY OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

Rigidity of the four limbs means that the patient is unable to flex or extend the wrist, elbow, knee, or ankle joints. It has many causes. In acute cases with sudden onset, it is due to invasion of Wind; such a rigidity is obviously of short duration and resolves itself once the Wind has been expelled.

In interior conditions, one common cause of rigidity of the four limbs is Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Wind in the elderly; another common cause, of course, is seen in Painful Obstruction (*Bi*) Syndrome, especially when caused by Dampness complicated by Phlegm in chronic cases, in which case the limb rigidity is accompanied by swelling and pain of the joints.

In the elderly, an inability to flex the joints is often due to retention of Phlegm in the channels, together with internal Wind. Rigidity of the limbs accompanied by pain in the joints and/or muscles that worsens at night is due to Blood stasis.

In Empty conditions, rigidity of the limbs may be due to a deficiency of Liver- and Kidney-Yin or of Spleen- and Kidney-Yang; these are more common in the elderly.

RIGIDITY OF THE LIMBS

- Invasion of external Wind (acute)
- Liver-Yang rising
- Liver-Wind (elderly)
- Painful Obstruction Syndrome with Dampness and Phlegm
- Phlegm with internal Wind in the channels (elderly)
- Blood stasis
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

4. PARALYSIS OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

Paralysis of the four limbs may range from a very slight limitation of movement, such as a tendency to drag a foot, to complete paralysis, as is seen in hemiplegia following a fracture of the spine.

The main causes of paralysis of the four limbs are a Stomach and Spleen deficiency, a general deficiency of Qi and Blood, and a deficiency of Yin of the Liver and Kidneys. There are also Full causes of paralysis, such as retention of Dampness in the muscles and Blood stasis.

The hemiplegia that occurs after a stroke is due to retention of Wind and Phlegm in the channels of the limbs on one side. The underlying pathology leading to a stroke is usually quite complex; it includes Phlegm, internal Wind, and Heat, usually occurring against a background of deficiency of Qi and Blood or of Yin.

PARALYSIS OF THE LIMBS

- Stomach and Spleen deficiency
- Qi and Blood deficiency
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Dampness in the muscles
- Blood stasis
- Phlegm and internal Wind in the channels

5. CONTRACTION OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

In acute cases with sudden onset, contraction of the four limbs may be caused by invasion of Wind; this is always of short duration and self-resolving. In Full conditions, the contractions may be caused by Dampness obstructing the muscles or by Heat injuring the body fluids of the limb channels.

In Empty conditions, the most common cause of contraction of the four limbs is Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency. In the elderly, a common example usually deriving from Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency is Dupuytren's contraction, which usually involves either the ring finger or the little finger.

6. CONVULSIONS OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

Convulsions of the four limbs always indicate internal Wind. In Chinese medicine, convulsions are considered to be due to the 'shaking' of the tendons, another reason the Liver is always involved in this pathology.

In chronic, interior conditions, internal Wind is generated as the result of a long pathological process, usually involving the Liver; in acute, febrile diseases, internal Wind is generated either directly from extreme Heat or from Yin deficiency, usually at the Blood level of the Four Levels. Whether the origin is internal or external, one can distinguish two types of internal Wind: one Full, characterized by strong convulsions with high amplitude; the other Empty, characterized by weak and infrequent convulsions with low amplitude, such as twitching.

In acute febrile diseases, internal Wind can develop quickly, even in a matter of days, when the Heat reaches the Blood level of the Four Levels: if Heat generates Wind, this causes strong convulsions of the four limbs; if Empty Wind develops from Yin deficiency (itself caused by the Heat burning up the body fluids), the convulsions of the four limbs are less pronounced and may be infrequent.

In interior conditions, convulsions or twitchings of the four limbs are caused by internal Wind, which may derive either from Liver-Yang rising or from Liver-Blood deficiency.

If a newborn baby suffers from slight, intermittent convulsions but looks completely normal in between the attacks, its convulsions are due to invasion of external Wind combined with pre-natal shock and poor hereditary constitution. The convulsions are more likely to occur in Spring and Autumn, and they are due to a deficiency of the Spleen and Kidneys. Because the sinews lack nourishment, they are easily attacked by external Wind.

Convulsions in women after childbirth (now relatively rare) are due to Liver-Blood deficiency generating Liver-Wind.

Epilepsy, of course, is a type of convulsions of the four limbs due to internal Wind. Called *dian xian*, according to Chinese medicine, it is caused both by internal Wind and by Phlegm obstructing the Mind's orifices, and the pathology involves Liver, Spleen, and Kidneys. Epileptic attacks during pregnancy or after childbirth are generally due to Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency and Blood deficiency giving rise to Liver-Wind.

CONVULSIONS OF THE LIMBS

- Wind (Full or Empty) in acute febrile diseases (more common in children)
- Liver-Wind in chronic, internal diseases
- External Wind with pre-natal shock and poor constitution: small, intermittent convulsions in babies
- Liver-Wind from Liver-Blood deficiency: convulsions after childbirth
- Epilepsy (Liver-Wind and Phlegm)

7. TREMOR OR SPASTICITY OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

Tremor consists of a shaking, trembling, or quivering of the arms or the legs, or both. It ranges from a very pronounced shaking with wide amplitude to a quiver that is so fine and so narrow in amplitude it is almost imperceptible. Tremor of the hands is more common than tremor of the legs. The cause is always Liver-Wind, and as with convulsions, it may be either the Full or Empty type; the former is characterized by a pronounced shaking of the limbs and the latter by a fine tremor.

The most common cause of tremor of the four limbs, especially in the elderly, is a combination of Liver-Wind and Phlegm affecting the channels and sinews. Liver-Yang rising by itself may also give rise to internal

Wind and tremors. Another common cause of tremors is Liver-Wind deriving from Liver-Blood deficiency; this is more common in women and will cause a fine tremor. Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency are also a common cause of tremors in the elderly.

In alcoholics, a fine tremor of the hands is caused by Damp-Heat. In rare cases, retention of Dampness in the muscles and sinews of the hands may cause a fine tremor of the hands.

A general deficiency of Qi and Blood failing to nourish the sinews and muscles may cause a mild, fine tremor of the limbs.

Spasticity and tremor of the limbs may also appear at the Blood Level (of the Four Levels) when the Heat generated by the febrile disease either leads to Liver-Wind or depletes the Yin so that Empty-Wind is generated.

TREMOR OF THE LIMBS

- Phlegm and internal Wind
- Liver-Yang rising, generating Liver-Wind
- Liver-Blood deficiency giving rise to Liver-Wind
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency giving rise to Liver-Wind
- Damp-Heat (alcoholics)

8. SWELLING OF THE JOINTS OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

A swelling of the joints of the four limbs is always due to Painful Obstruction (*Bi*) Syndrome, especially that deriving from Dampness; in chronic conditions, Dampness develops into Phlegm, which obstructs the joints and causes further swelling and bone deformities. In adults, especially women, it is very common for Painful Obstruction Syndrome and swelling of the joints of the four limbs to occur against a background of Blood deficiency. If the joints are red and hot to the touch in addition to being swollen, it indicates retention of Damp-Heat.

9. OEDEMA OF THE FOUR LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64, 65, 68](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

There are two types of oedema, one called 'water oedema' (*shui zhong*) and the other 'Qi oedema' (*qi zhong*). Water

oedema is due to Yang deficiency and is always pitting oedema; that is, the skin pits and changes colour on pressure. Qi oedema is due to either Qi stagnation or Dampness, and the skin does not pit nor does it change colour on pressure.

Another classification is Yang and Yin oedema; the former is the Full-type and is due to invasion of Wind and Dampness of Toxic Heat, whereas the latter is the Empty-type and is due to a deficiency of Spleen- and/or Kidney-Yang. In Yin oedema there is marked pitting on pressure, whereas in Yang oedema there is little or no pitting. From a Western medicine perspective, absence of pitting indicates oedema due to hypothyroidism.

When observing the limbs for oedema, we should always palpate the edematous area and check whether or not the skin pits on palpation. If pressing the skin with the thumb leaves a dent that takes a long time to spring back, this indicates 'water oedema', or oedema due to the retention of fluids; if pressing the skin with the thumb forms no dent, this indicates 'Qi oedema', which is due to Qi stagnation or Dampness.

True oedema is generally due to deficient Yang; the fluids it is unable to transform, transport, and excrete properly accumulate in the space between the skin and muscles (*cou li*).

Yang deficiency is the most common cause of oedema of the limbs; Lung-Yang deficiency affects primarily the hands, Kidney-Yang deficiency primarily the feet, and Spleen-Yang deficiency both. Oedema of the four limbs may also derive from retention of Dampness in the muscles, which may be associated with Cold or with Heat.

Qi stagnation affecting the muscles may also cause oedema of the limbs, in which case it will be the non-pitting type. In the elderly, oedema of the limbs may also derive from Qi deficiency and Blood stasis. Finally, acute oedema of the hands and face only may be due to invasion of the Lungs by Wind-Water, which is a type of Wind-Cold.



TREATMENT NOTE

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, L.I.-10 Shousanli, LU-7 Lieque, SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

OEDEMA OF THE LIMBS

- Lung-Yang deficiency: oedema of the hands
- Kidney-Yang deficiency: oedema of the feet
- Spleen-Yang deficiency: oedema of the four limbs
- Dampness: oedema of the four limbs
- Qi stagnation: oedema of the four limbs (non-pitting)
- Invasion of the Lungs by Wind-Water: acute oedema of the hands



CHAPTER 18 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The importance of observation of the skin, muscles, sinews, and blood vessels of the limbs in revealing the state of the Lungs, Spleen, Liver, and Heart, respectively.
- The pathologies behind atrophy, flaccidity, movement or lack of movement, oedema, and swelling of the four limbs.

Observation of the Legs

19

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Legs

Oedema of the legs

Atrophy of the legs

Paralysis

Arched legs

Gait

Festination

Unstable gait

Staggering gait

Stepping gait

Shuffling gait

Observation of the legs includes both observation of the legs themselves and also of the gait. The following leg signs will be discussed:

1. Legs
 - a) Oedema of the legs
 - b) Atrophy of the legs
 - c) Paralysis of the legs
 - d) Arched legs
2. Gait
 - a) Festination
 - b) Unstable gait
 - c) Staggering gait
 - d) Stepping gait
 - e) Shuffling gait

The symptoms and signs related to the legs are in Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#).

1. LEGS

a) Oedema of the legs

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64, 66, 68](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

Oedema is generally caused by Yang deficiency of the Lung, Spleen, or Kidneys or by retention of Dampness.

When oedema affects the legs, it is due either to a Spleen-Yang deficiency, a Kidney-Yang deficiency, or a combination of the two.

In some cases, oedema may also be due to an accumulation of Dampness in the legs that prevents the proper transformation of fluids; in this case, besides showing oedema, the legs will look generally puffy. Oedema caused by a deficiency of Yang or an accumulation of Dampness shows pitting; that is, the skin indents and changes colour when pressure is applied. In a few cases, oedema may be due to stagnation of Qi and Blood in the legs, in which case it is non-pitting ([Fig. 19.1](#)).

Case History

A 51-year-old man had been suffering from oedema of the legs and abdomen, breathlessness, night-sweating, and inability to lie down for 8 months. A Western diagnosis revealed that he suffered from congestive cardiac failure. He also experienced a feeling of heat in the head and a feeling of throbbing of the head; from a Western diagnostic point of view, this was due to hypertension. Interrogation revealed that he also experienced a feeling of pressure in the right eye in the morning, tinnitus, thirst, and a tendency to diarrhoea.

He was slightly overweight, and his body shape was the Fire type; that is, he had a relatively round body shape, round head, and small hands and feet. However, the Fire type should walk briskly and talk fast, whereas this patient walked and talked rather slowly. His complexion was dull-pale.

His tongue was very slightly Pale and very slightly Red on the sides with a deep Heart crack and a sticky-white tongue coating. His pulse was Weak on both Rear positions but especially on the right, Weak on the right-Front position, and Slippery on the left-Front position.

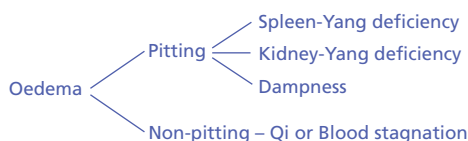


Figure 19.1. Oedema of the legs.

Diagnosis

The contradiction between the patient's Fire body shape and his slow walk and talk indicates straightaway a potential problem in the Fire element and the Heart. This is confirmed by the presence of the deep Heart crack on the tongue; this usually indicates either severe emotional problems (not the case for this patient) or a heart problem. The heart problem is also confirmed by the Slippery quality on the Heart position, which is all the more striking considering the Weak quality of most of the other pulses. When only the Heart pulse is Slippery, especially in its lateral or medial aspects, it often indicates the possibility of heart disease in a Western sense. Thus, in this patient, the contradiction between the body type and his walking and talking, the pulse and the tongue, all clearly indicate the possibility of an actual heart disease, which was of course confirmed by the Western diagnosis.

In terms of patterns, there is a deficiency of Spleen- and Kidney-Yang, manifested by the tinnitus, tendency to diarrhoea, and Weak pulse on both Rear positions, with Water overflowing to the Heart, which is manifested by the oedema, breathlessness, and inability to lie down. In addition to these two patterns, there is also Liver-Yang rising (stemming from the Kidney deficiency), manifesting with a feeling of heat and throbbing of the head, thirst, pressure in the eye, and Red sides of the tongue.



TREATMENT NOTE

Oedema of the legs: Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-7 Fuli, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-20 Pishu.

b) Atrophy of the legs

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The most common cause of atrophy of the legs is a chronic deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen. Another cause is a deficiency of Yin of the Liver and Kidneys (more common in the elderly).

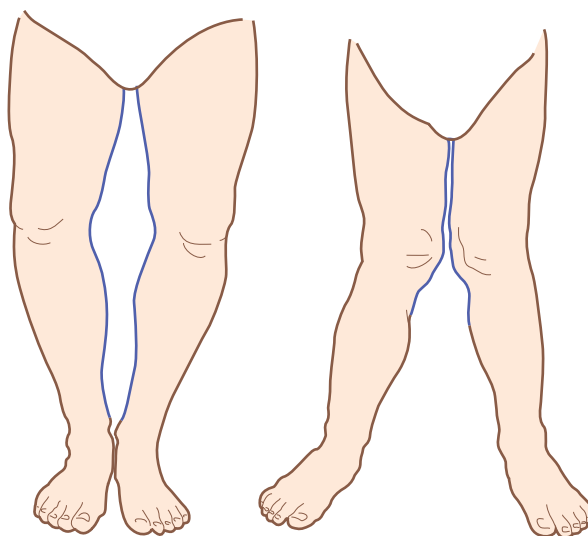


Figure 19.2. Arched legs.

c) Paralysis

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

Paralysis of the legs may be due to chronic Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency, to Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency, or to Wind-Phlegm in the limbs. The first two patterns are seen in neurological conditions, and the third is seen in the sequelae stage of Wind-stroke.

d) Arched legs

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

In children, arched legs, which may be bowed outward or inward, are due to a congenital deficiency of the Liver and Kidneys or of the Stomach and Spleen ([Fig. 19.2](#)).

2. GAIT

a) Festination

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

Festination refers to a walk characterized by leaning forwards almost to the point of falling, so that the patient needs to take quick and small steps. Once the patient starts walking, it is difficult for him or her to stop. The causes of this way of walking are usually a severe, chronic deficiency of Liver- and Kidney-Yin or a severe deficiency of Qi and Blood, in both cases with internal Wind.

Festination is typically seen in Parkinson's disease.

b) Unstable gait

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The unstable gait is characterized by the patient raising the leg very high and dropping it suddenly; the paces are wide, the walk is unstable, and the patient will fall easily if he or she closes the eyes. Also, the individual loses balance when standing. This gait is due to a chronic and severe Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency or a severe deficiency of Qi and Blood, in both cases with internal Wind.

c) Staggering gait

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The staggering gait consists of swaying from side to side when walking, as if in a state of drunkenness. This gait may be due to Phlegm and Blood stasis obstructing the legs or to a severe deficiency of Kidney- and Liver-Yin.

d) Stepping gait

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The stepping gait consists of the patient raising the leg high and dropping the foot with the toes only touching

the ground, as if he or she were stepping over an obstacle. This type of gait is due to a severe Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency or Qi and Blood deficiency, in both cases with internal Wind.

e) Shuffling gait

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The shuffling gait consists of the patient not lifting the feet up when walking. It is due to a severe deficiency of Liver- and Kidney-Yin, often combined with Wind-Phlegm. This gait is commonly seen in people suffering from Parkinson's disease.



CHAPTER 19 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Leg oedema, atrophy, paralysis, and arched legs.
- The clinical significance of different gaits.

20

Observation of Excretions

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Sputum**Nasal discharge****Sweat****Lochia****Urine****Stools***Consistency**Shape**Colour***Vaginal discharge***Colour**Consistency***Menstrual blood***Colour**Consistency*

Generally, the term 'observation of the excretions' would include observation of urine, stools, vaginal discharge, and menstrual blood. As the doctor normally finds out about these excretions through interrogation rather than observation, they will be left out of this chapter; the reader should refer to the Part 2, Interrogation, in [Chapter 31](#).

The following signs are discussed:

1. Sputum
2. Nasal discharge
3. Sweat
4. Lochia
5. Urine
6. Stools
7. Vaginal discharge
8. Menstrual blood

1. SPUTUM

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

Sputum is always, by definition, a manifestation of Phlegm retained in the Lungs. The colour and

consistency of the sputum give us an indication of the nature of the condition: Hot or Cold; or Deficient or Excess.

White and dilute sputum indicates Cold-Phlegm, which is usually associated with a Yang deficiency of the Spleen and/or Kidneys.

White and sticky sputum indicates Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs, whereas yellow and sticky sputum indicates Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs.

Yellow and sticky sputum indicates Phlegm-Heat; if it is also purulent, it indicates Toxic Heat in the Lungs. Very dark sputum the colour of coffee indicates Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs with a predominance of Heat injuring the blood vessels.

Blood-streaked sputum indicates either Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs or, if it is scanty, Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat.



CLINICAL NOTE

I attach great importance to the expectoration of sputum as a manifestation of Phlegm. When I suspect Phlegm, I always ask patients whether they cough up some sputum, and, even if it is only once in the morning, I take that as a sign of Phlegm.



TREATMENT NOTE

The points for Phlegm vary according to the type and location of Phlegm. For Phlegm in the Lungs, I use LU-1 Zhongfu, LU-5 Chize, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-40 Fenglong.

SPUTUM

- White and dilute: Cold-Phlegm
- White and sticky: Damp-Phlegm
- Yellow and sticky: Phlegm-Heat
- Yellow, sticky, and purulent: Toxic Heat
- Dark, like coffee grounds: Phlegm-Heat at Blood level
- Blood-streaked: Phlegm-Heat
- Scanty and blood-streaked: Empty Heat

2. NASAL DISCHARGE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Nasal discharge may indicate either Phlegm or Dampness: for example, a sticky-yellow nasal discharge in a person suffering from acute bronchitis indicates Phlegm-Heat, whereas the nasal discharge of a person suffering from sinusitis indicates Damp-Heat.

In some cases, nasal discharge may not fall into either category but is due simply to an impairment of the Lung's diffusing and descending of fluids: examples of this are the chronic nasal discharge of allergic rhinitis or the acute nasal discharge seen in the common cold.

A white, watery, and dilute nasal discharge is seen either in allergic rhinitis or in the common cold: in the former case it is due to deficient Lung-Qi failing to diffuse and descend the fluids, whereas in the latter it is due to external Wind impairing the Lung's diffusing and descending of fluids.

A white and sticky nasal discharge may indicate either an external invasion of Wind-Heat or chronic retention of Dampness in the nose and sinuses. A sticky-yellow nasal discharge indicates chronic retention of Damp-Heat in the nose and sinuses.

A blood-streaked nasal discharge may indicate either Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs or Damp-Heat in the nose or sinuses.

NASAL DISCHARGE

- White, watery, dilute: Cold-Phlegm. In rhinitis, Lung-Qi deficiency; in the common cold, external Wind.
- White, sticky: Dampness
- Yellow, sticky: Damp-Heat
- Blood-streaked: Phlegm-Heat or Damp-Heat

3. SWEAT

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 76](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 41](#)

Sweating is generally due either to Heat or to a deficiency (of Qi, Yang or Yin). Sweat that looks like drops of oil, especially on the forehead, indicates collapse of Yang. Yellow sweat indicates Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen, whereas profuse, incessant sweating all over the body indicates either Stomach-Heat in acute conditions or severe deficiency of Yang in chronic conditions.

Sweating on the head indicates Heat or Damp-Heat in the Stomach or Empty-Heat deriving from Kidney-Yin deficiency. In children, sweating on the head is usually due to retention of Food.

Sweating on the nose indicates Damp-Heat in the Lungs and/or Stomach. Sweating on the hands indicates deficiency of Qi or Yin of the Lungs or Heart, or Heat in the Lungs or Heart. Sweating of the palms and soles indicates Kidney-Yin deficiency.

SWEAT

- Like drops of oil on the forehead: collapse of Yang
- Yellow: Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen
- Profuse, incessant: Stomach-Heat or Yang deficiency
- Sweating on head: Heat or Damp-Heat in Stomach or Empty Heat from Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Sweating on head in children: retention of Food
- Sweating on the nose: Damp-Heat in the Lungs and/or Stomach
- Sweating on the hands: Qi or Yin deficiency of Lungs and/or Heart, or Heat in Lungs and/or Heart
- Sweating of palms and soles: Kidney-Yin deficiency

4. LOCHIA

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 87](#)

Abundant and pale lochia generally indicates Qi deficiency; abundant and red lochia indicates Blood-Heat or Empty Heat in the Blood; abundant and dark lochia indicates Blood stasis or Qi deficiency with Blood stasis. Scanty lochial discharge, if dark, usually indicates Blood stasis; if pale, it may also be due to a severe deficiency of Qi and Blood. A scanty lochial discharge may also be due to Cold obstructing the Uterus.

5. URINE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 54](#)

The colour of the urine gives a good indication of the Hot and Cold condition of the patient. Normal urine is pale-yellow. Pale urine indicates Cold in the Bladder or Kidney-Yang deficiency; dark urine indicates Heat in the Bladder or Kidney-Yin deficiency. It should be remembered that the colour of the urine is affected

when the person drinks a lot of water (becoming paler than it would otherwise be) and also when the person takes Vitamin B, which makes the urine bright-yellow.

Blood in the urine indicates either Qi deficiency (of the Spleen and Kidneys), Heat in the Bladder, or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Very dark urine, like soya sauce, indicates a kidney disease such as kidney failure or glomerulonephritis.

Turbid urine indicates Dampness in the urinary passages. Urine with small flakes of mucus indicates Damp-Heat in the Bladder.



TREATMENT NOTE

Dampness in the urinary passages is extremely common; it may be combined with Cold or Heat or it may be neutral (i.e., neither hot nor cold). Besides affecting the colour of the urine, making it usually turbid, Dampness affects micturition and may cause dysuria or pain on urination. My preferred herbal prescription for Dampness in the urinary passages is *Bi Xie Fen Qing Yin* (Dioscorea separating the Clear decoction). I modify the formula according to whether there is Cold or Heat.

URINE

- Pale: Cold in the Bladder or Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Dark: Heat in the Bladder or Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Red (with blood): Qi deficiency, Heat in the Bladder, or Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Turbid urine: Dampness in the urinary passages

6. STOOLS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 72](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#);
Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 54](#)

The following aspects of observation of the stools will be discussed:

- Consistency
- Shape
- Colour

a) Consistency

The normal stool is well formed; it is not loose, not too dry, and it doesn't float. An excessively dry stool indicates

either Heat in the Intestines, Blood deficiency (of the Liver) or Yin deficiency (which may affect the Large Intestine, Spleen, Liver, or Kidneys).

Loose stools generally indicate a deficiency of the Spleen and/or Kidneys. A deficiency of the Spleen is by far the most common cause of chronic diarrhoea or loose stools; a Kidney deficiency is a common cause of chronic diarrhoea in the elderly. If the diarrhoea is severe and very watery, it usually indicates Yang deficiency (of the Spleen and/or Kidneys), whereas loose stools usually indicate Spleen-Qi deficiency.

However, there are also Full causes of diarrhoea, principally Dampness (which could be associated with Heat or Cold) and Cold in the Spleen and Intestines.

The presence of mucus in the stools indicates Dampness, whereas the presence of blood indicates deficient Spleen-Qi not holding Blood, Damp-Heat, or Blood stasis in the Intestines.

Undigested food in the stools indicates Spleen-Qi deficiency.

Sticky stools that necessitate cleaning the toilet with a toilet brush every time indicate Dampness in the Intestines.

b) Shape

Stools like small pellets indicate Liver-Qi stagnation or Heat if they are also dry. Long and thin stools, like pencils, indicate Spleen-Qi deficiency – bear in mind that they could also indicate carcinoma of the bowel (see [Fig. 31.1](#)).

c) Colour

Normal stools are light-brown in colour. Pale-yellow stools indicate Empty Heat (of Spleen, Large Intestine, or Kidneys). Dark-yellow stools indicate Full Heat (of Large Intestine). Dark stools may indicate the presence of occult blood; they generally indicate Heat (of the Large Intestine).

Pale, almost white, stools indicate Cold in the Large Intestine. Green stools indicate Liver-Qi invading the Spleen. Red stools indicate the presence of fresh blood, which may be due either to Heat in the Large Intestine or to Spleen-Qi deficiency. Greenish-bluish stools indicate the penetration of external Cold into the Large Intestine (common in babies). Black or very dark stools indicate Blood stasis.



TREATMENT NOTE

Quite apart from the many different patterns affecting the stools and defecation, there are three essential points that I would use in any bowel problem from any pattern. These points are ST-25 Tianshu, BL-25 Dachangshu and ST-37 Shangjuxu.

STOOLS

Consistency

- Diarrhoea with mucus: Dampness in the Intestines
- Loose stools: Spleen-Qi deficiency or Dampness
- Diarrhoea with blood: Damp-Heat or Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Undigested food in the stools: Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Mucus in the stools: Dampness in the Intestines
- Blood in the stools: Spleen-Qi not holding Blood or Damp-Heat
- Sticky stools: Dampness in the Intestines

Shape

- Bitty stools like pellets: Liver-Qi stagnation
- Long, thin stools like pencils: Spleen-Qi deficiency

Colour

- Light-brown: normal
- Pale-yellow: Empty Heat
- Dark-yellow: Full Heat
- Dark: Heat
- Pale: Cold
- Green: Liver-Qi invading Spleen
- Red: Large Intestine Heat or Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Greenish-bluish: Cold in Large Intestine
- Very dark, black: Blood stasis

7. VAGINAL DISCHARGE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 89](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#);
Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 54](#)

The following two aspects of observation of vaginal discharge will be discussed:

- Colour
- Consistency

a) Colour

- White: Cold. Cold can derive from Spleen- or Kidney-Yang deficiency, or from exterior Cold-Dampness.
- Yellow: Heat, usually Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner
- Greenish: Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

- Red and white: Damp-Heat
- Yellow, red with white pus after menopause: Toxic Heat

b) Consistency

- Watery: Cold-Dampness and/or Deficiency condition
- Thick: Damp-Heat and/or Excess condition

8. MENSTRUAL BLOOD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 84](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#);
Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 54](#)

The following two aspects of observation of menstrual blood will be discussed:

- Colour
- Consistency

a) Colour

The colour of the menstrual blood varies slightly during the period. In general, it is usually dark-red, being lighter at the beginning, deep-red in the middle, and pinkish at the end of the period. The following are the main areas of questioning with regard to colour:

- Dark-red or bright-red: Blood-Heat
- Pale: Blood deficiency
- Blackish, very dark: stasis of Blood
- Purplish: Full-Cold
- Brownish (like soya-bean sauce) and dilute: Empty-Cold
- Scarlet-red: Empty-Heat in Blood

b) Consistency

The normal flow does not coagulate, and there are no clots; the blood is neither dilute nor thick. The following are the main areas of questioning with regard to the consistency of menstrual blood:

- Clotted, with dark, dull clots: stasis of Blood or Cold in the Uterus.
- Clotted, with dark but fresh-looking clots: Heat.
- Large clots: stasis of Blood.
- Small dark clots, but blood not dark: Cold in the Uterus.
- Watery: Blood or Yin deficiency.
- Sticky: Dampness or Damp-Heat in the Uterus.

**TREATMENT NOTE**

I consider dark menstrual blood with large, dark clots a sign of Blood stasis in the Uterus, even in the absence of any other symptom or sign.

**CHAPTER 20 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The student now should understand:

- The pathologies underlying sputum, nasal discharge, and sweat.
- The implications of stool colour, consistency, and shape and of urine colour.
- The clinical significance of the colour and consistency of menstrual blood, vaginal discharge, and lochia.

Observation of the Skin

21

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OVERVIEW

Observation of the skin is an important aspect of observational diagnosis. It includes observing the skin colour, skin texture, skin pores, and the body hair, in addition to, of course, any abnormal manifestations on the skin, such as various skin diseases, moles, warts or naevi.

Skin layers

Ancient Chinese medicine had its own conception of the skin as made up of different layers and muscles. This conception was similar to that of modern Western medicine. The various layers and muscles in the structure of the skin and the organs that influence them are as follows:

1. *Fu* indicates the superficial layer of skin (i.e. the epidermis), which is influenced mostly by the Lungs
2. *Ge* indicates the deep layer of skin (i.e. the dermis), which is influenced by the Lungs, Liver, and Kidneys
3. *Ji* (sometimes translated as 'flesh') indicates the subcutaneous muscles; this structure is influenced by the Spleen and Liver
4. *Fen Rou* indicates two structures: fat (influenced by the Spleen, Kidneys, and Directing Vessel) and the muscles near the bones (influenced by the Spleen and Liver)
5. *Cou Li* (the space between skin and muscles) is influenced by the Lungs and Spleen.^(a)
6. *Xuan Fu* (i.e. skin pores from which sweat is excreted and also the sebaceous glands) also is influenced by the Lungs and Spleen.

Figure 21.1 shows various types of skin lesions.

ORGANS INFLUENCING THE LAYERS OF THE SKIN

- *Fu*: Lungs
- *Ge*: Lungs, Liver, and Kidneys
- *Ji*: Spleen and Liver
- *Fen* (or *Fen Rou*): Spleen, Kidneys, and Directing Vessel
- *Rou* (or *Fen Rou*): Spleen and Liver
- *Cou Li*: Lungs and Spleen
- *Xuan Fu*: Lungs

The skin and the lungs

As a whole, the skin is influenced by the Lungs. [Chapter 10](#) of the ‘Simple Questions’ says: ‘*The Lungs are connected to the skin and control the state of the body hair*’.¹ The Lungs also control the opening and closing of the pores, a function related to the Lungs’ diffusion of Defensive-Qi to the skin.

The pores were called ‘sweat holes’ (*han kong*). Their function is to discharge turbid Qi and sweat. Defensive-Qi, and therefore the Lungs’ opening and closing of the pores, is a manifestation of Defensive-Qi’s protective function against the invasion of pathogenic factors. When the Defensive-Qi is properly regulated, the pores are closed on exposure to a pathogenic factor and open during exercise or on exposure to hot weather.

A weakness of Lung-Qi and of the Defensive-Qi may lead to ‘flaccidity’ of the pores and result in their being too open; this facilitates the invasion of pathogenic factors. In pathology, a weakness of Lung-Qi, and therefore of the Defensive Qi in the space between the skin and muscles, causes acute skin diseases due to invasion of external Wind, such as urticaria.



TREATMENT NOTE

To regulate the Defensive Qi, the *Cou Li* space, and the opening and closing of the pores, I use L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu and ST-36 Zusanli. The herbal prescription *Gui Zhi Tang Ramulus Cinnamomi Decoction* achieves the same effects.

The skin and the stomach and spleen

The Stomach and Spleen produce Qi and Blood; the turbid part of Qi forms the Defensive-Qi, whereas the

clear part forms Nutritive-Qi. The Defensive-Qi, through the diffusion of Lung-Qi, reaches the skin, warming it and regulating the opening and closing of the pores. The Stomach fluids also reach the skin through the diffusion of Lung-Qi, moistening it. The Stomach is also one of the origins of body fluids, part of which go to the Lungs and part of which go to the Kidneys. Kidney-Yang warms the body fluids derived from the Stomach; the turbid part is excreted as urine, and the pure part goes to the skin via the Triple Burner and the Bladder channel in the back.

The Spleen also controls the muscles immediately below the skin, in addition to the adipose tissue located there. In pathology, a deficiency of the Spleen may affect these structures and cause diseases such as scleroderma. Of course, Dampness resulting from a deficiency of the Spleen is the cause of many common skin diseases, such as eczema, herpes, acne, and so forth. A failure of Spleen-Qi in holding blood in the vessels may cause bleeding under the skin and therefore red maculae.

The skin and the kidneys

The Kidneys influence the skin in other ways. Although the Lungs diffuse Defensive-Qi, and the Stomach and Spleen contribute to Defensive-Qi’s production, the Defensive-Qi stems from the Lower Burner and from the Kidneys. Defensive-Qi is Yang in nature, and it is therefore influenced by Kidney-Yang and the Fire of the Gate of Life.

The Kidneys also play an important role in the distribution of Defensive Qi to all other channels and parts of the body, with the aid of the Triple Burner and the Bladder channel. The Back-Transporting points where the Defensive Qi infuses to the Internal Organs are situated in the back along the Bladder channel. This is because the Defensive Qi emerges from the Kidneys, through the Triple Burner, and flows up along the Bladder channel. Moreover, when the Defensive Qi emerges in the morning after flowing in the Yin organs at night, it starts from the Kidney channel ([Fig. 21.2](#)).²

Therefore, when the Kidneys are deficient, the Defensive Qi may also be deficient. This deficiency in the skin gives rise to skin diseases. In particular, a deficiency of the Kidneys, with its consequent failure to irrigate the skin with Defensive Qi, is often at the root of complex modern skin diseases, such as lupus erythematosus and scleroderma.

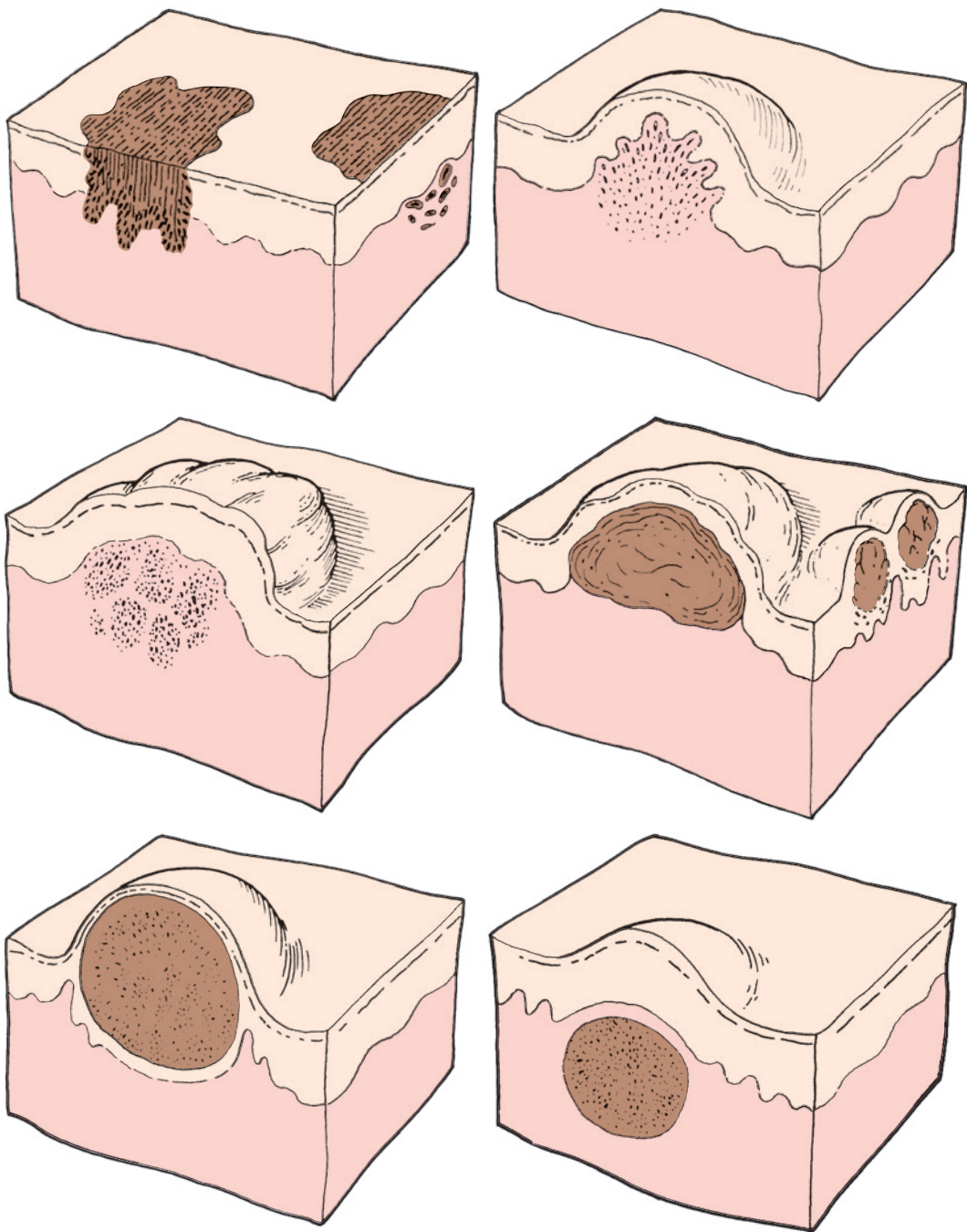


Figure 21.1. Skin lesions.

Continued

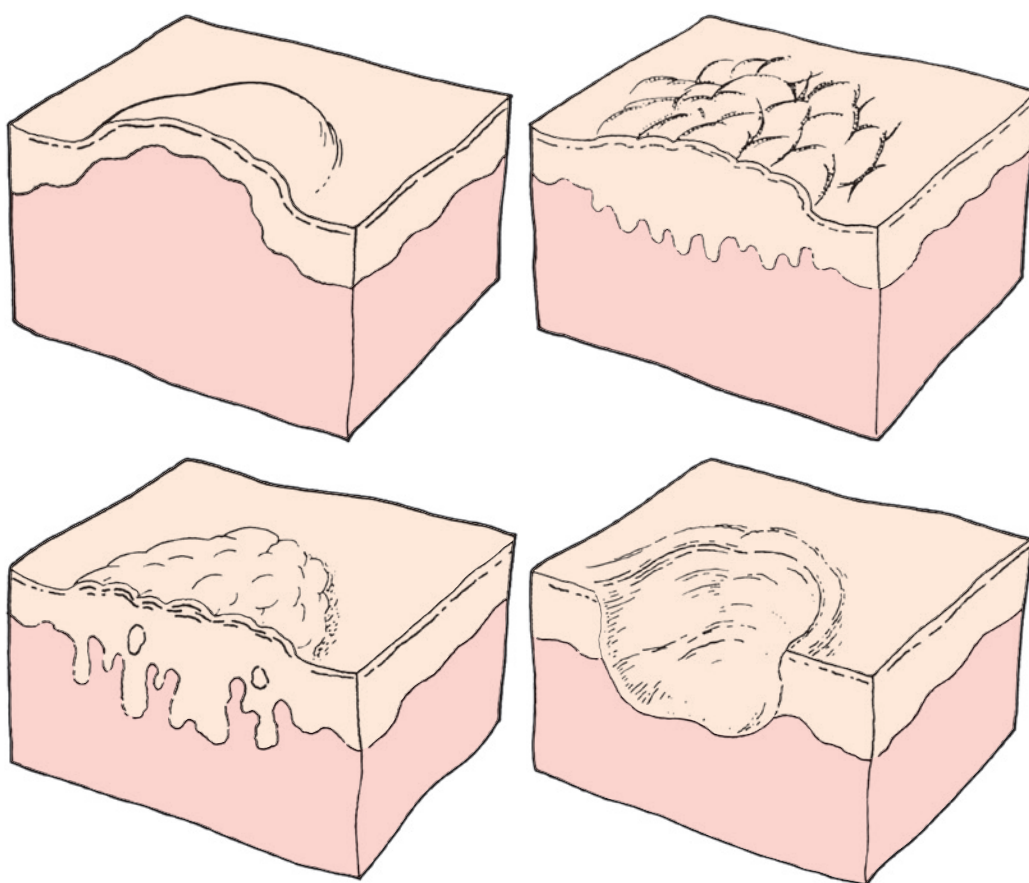


Figure 21.1., cont'd.

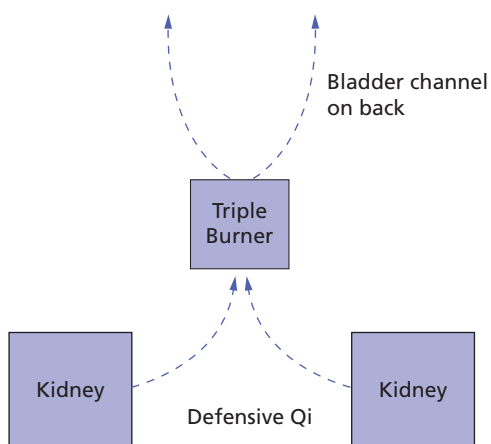


Figure 21.2. Relationship between the Kidneys, Defensive-Qi, and skin.

Apart from a Kidney deficiency and impairment of the Defensive Qi circulation in the skin, these diseases are often associated with Yin Fire; that is, a pathological rise of the Minister Fire upwards stemming from a deficiency of the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*). In such diseases, there are superficial manifestations on the skin but the root cause is a Kidney deficiency and a deficiency of the Original Qi; this also explains the often contradictory signs of a red rash on the skin of the face and a Pale tongue.

The Triple Burner also influences the skin, in particular the skin's moisture, because it plays such an important role in the metabolism of fluids. One important aspect of the Triple Burner, in fact, is the diffusion of fluids in the Upper Burner, the separation and transformation of fluids in the Middle Burner, and the excretion

of fluids in the Lower Burner. Because heat is needed to transform and excrete fluids, the Triple Burner relies on that derived from the Fire of the Gate of Life between the Kidneys. From this point of view, the Triple Burner's function of transporting and excreting fluids is inseparable from its location between the Kidneys, where the Fire of the Gate of Life resides. For this reason, the Triple Burner is closely related to the Original Qi.

Chapter 66 of the 'Classic of Difficulties' states: 'The Motive Force [Dong Qi] that resides between the Kidneys below the umbilicus is the source of life [ming] and the root of the twelve channels and that is why it is called Original [Qi]. The Triple Burner is the emissary of the Original Qi.^[b] It penetrates through the three Burners and spreads to the five Yin and the six Yang organs. Original Qi is the honorary name for the Triple Burner and that is why the places where [the Qi of the Triple Burner] stops in turn are called Origin [Source] points. Therefore diseases of the five Yin and the six Yang organs can be reflected on the Origin [Source] points'.³ Because the Original Qi, which resides between the Kidneys, is the basis for the Triple Burner and transforms fluids that affect the skin, this is another way the Kidneys influence the skin (Fig. 21.3).

Chapter 47 of the 'Spiritual Axis' illustrates the connection between the skin and the Kidneys and Triple Burner: 'The Kidneys are connected with the Triple Burner and the Bladder which influence the pores and body hair'.⁴ Another passage from Chapter 64 of the 'Simple

Questions' also illustrates the relationship between the Kidneys and the skin: 'When there is a pathogenic factor in the Kidneys, the skin is affected and there is a rash'.⁵

Therefore, if the Kidneys are healthy, the skin is moistened and has lustre. If the Kidneys are deficient (in particular Kidney-Yin), the fluids are deficient and the skin loses moisture and becomes dry and lustreless. The thickening and hardening of the skin seen in scleroderma may be caused by a deficiency of Kidney-Yin in chronic cases. If Kidney-Yang is deficient, the fluids accumulate in the space between the skin and muscles and cause oedema.

The skin and the liver

The Liver influences the skin through Liver-Blood. Like Kidney-Yin, Liver-Blood moistens and nourishes the skin, and a deficiency of Liver-Blood is a common cause of dry skin, especially in women (of course, Liver-Yin deficiency may also bring this about). Liver-Fire, on the other hand, has a heating effect on the skin and is the underlying pattern in many skin diseases.

The skin and the heart

The Heart influences the skin in a way similar to the Liver: Heart-Blood moistens and nourishes the skin, just as Liver-Blood does. The influence of Heart-Blood in skin diseases, however, is seen especially on the face.

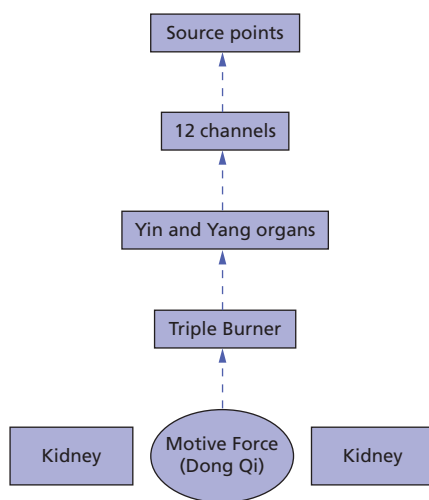


Figure 21.3. Relationship between Kidneys, Triple Burner, and skin.

INFLUENCE OF THE ORGANS ON THE SKIN

- Lungs: pores, body hair, and sweat
- Stomach and Spleen: adipose tissue below the skin, vessels below the skin, moisture of the skin
- Kidneys: moisture, Defensive-Qi in the space between skin and muscles
- Liver: moisture and lustre
- Heart: moisture, blood vessels under the skin

Thus, from the diagnostic point of view, the skin reflects the state of the body fluids (and therefore of the organs mentioned above) and also conditions of Heat or Cold, Fullness or Emptiness, and Yin or Yang.

The skin and the connecting channels

The blood vessels (venules) visible on the surface of the skin are a reflection of the Connecting channels.

When they become visible, the blood vessels are an expression of the percolation of the Blood Connecting channels towards the surface of the skin (the Blood Connecting vessels at the deep level of the Connecting channels).

Chapter 17 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'The Main channels are in the Interior; their branches are horizontal [or crosswise] forming the Luo channels: branching out from these are the Minute Luo. When these are Full with stagnant Blood they should be drained with bleeding with needle; when they are deficient, they should be tonified with herbs'*.⁶

Chapter 10 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'The Main channels are deep and hidden between the muscles and cannot be seen; only the Spleen channel can be seen as it emerges from above the internal malleolus and it has no place to hide. The Luo channels are superficial and can be seen'*.⁷

Chapter 10 of the 'Spiritual Axis' also says: *'When the Luo channels are greenish-bluish it indicates Cold and pain; when they are red it indicates Heat'*.⁸

Macules are a reflection of the Blood Connecting channels; red macules indicate Blood Heat, whereas purple ones indicate Blood stasis. Bluish macules indicate pain and Blood stasis.

Papules indicate Heat in the Connecting channels. **Vesicles** indicate Dampness in the space between skin and muscles and the Connecting channels. **Pustules** indicate Toxic Heat in the Connecting channels.

Apart from the blood vessels, the colour of the skin itself reflects the condition of the Connecting channels; red indicates Heat, green indicates pain, purple indicates Blood stasis, and bluish indicates Blood stasis and pain.

The chapter now takes up the discussion of the following topics:

1. Skin signs
 - a) Skin colour
 - b) Skin texture
 - c) Skin of the forearm
 - d) Space between the skin and the muscles
 - e) Body hair
 - f) Macules
 - g) Papules
 - h) Vesicles
 - i) Pustules (including wheals and plaques)
 - j) Dry skin
 - k) Greasy skin
 - l) Swelling of the skin
 - m) Scales

- n) Erosion of the skin
- o) Rashes
- p) Fissures
- q) Skin ulcers
- r) Dermographism

2. Skin diseases
 - a) Eczema
 - b) Acne
 - c) Psoriasis
 - d) Urticaria
 - e) Naevi
 - f) Malignant melanoma
 - g) Tinea
 - h) Candida
 - i) Herpes simplex
 - j) Herpes zoster
 - k) Warts
 - l) Rosacea

1. SKIN SIGNS

a) Skin colour

'Skin colour' refers to the colour of the body-skin itself, as distinct from the complexion (discussed in **Chapter 3**). It does not refer to skin rashes, which will be discussed separately. The colours discussed are:

- Pale
- Red
- Yellow
- Bluish-greenish
- Dark

Of course, when observing body-skin colour, one should take into account individual variations due to race and occupation. This has already been discussed in **Chapter 3** dealing with observation of the complexion. For example, a body skin that might be described as 'pale' in a Mediterranean person would be normal in a Swedish person. Generally speaking, the colours described below apply to any racial group; for example, the body skin of an African-American or an Indian may be pale in colour, like a Caucasian's, although it will obviously look different.

The pathological colours described below may not necessarily appear all over the body but may manifest in various localized places; the location of the pathological colour gives an indication of the organ and channel involved. If a large area is affected, it generally indicates that an organ is involved, whereas if the pathological

colour appears along a definite line, it indicates that the channel is involved. For example, if the epigastrium is generally very pale, it may indicate a condition of Yang deficiency of the Stomach, whereas if there is a redness appearing along the Lung channel, it may indicate Heat in that particular channel rather than in the organ (although it would not exclude Heat in the organ as well).

i) Pale body-skin

A pale body-skin may indicate Qi, Yang, or Blood deficiency. In Qi deficiency the body-skin is slightly pale, in Yang deficiency it is pale and bright, and in Blood deficiency it is pale and dull.

ii) Red body-skin

A red body-skin generally indicates Heat. If the redness appears suddenly and the colour is bright-red, it indicates Full Heat; if the redness appears gradually and the colour is red but dull and dry, it indicates Empty Heat; if the colour is dark-red and dull, it indicates Blood stasis. A 'floating' red colour (i.e. the red looks like 'rouge' applied to the surface of the skin) indicates Empty Heat.

A redness of the body-skin in acute cases is common in invasions of Wind-Heat: in such cases, besides the face, the neck and arms may also become red.

iii) Yellow body-skin

A dull-yellow body-skin indicates Dampness or chronic Qi and Blood deficiency, whereas a bright-yellow skin

indicates Damp-Heat; with an acute onset, this indicates the possibility of jaundice. One can distinguish five different yellow colours (Table 21.1):

- Dampness yellow
- Dull yellow
- Stagnant-Blood yellow
- Jaundice yellow
- 'Thick' yellow

iv) Bluish-greenish body-skin

As usual, 'bluish-greenish' is a translation of the Chinese word '*qing*'. A bluish colour of the body-skin generally indicates Cold; such a colour is common on the Bladder channel in the buttocks and legs and is frequently seen in patients suffering from sciatica.

A greenish colour of the body-skin generally indicates Qi or Blood stagnation; such a colour is common on the face and abdomen.

In newborns, a greenish colour on the buttocks and back indicates a poor constitution and Accumulation Disorder.

v) Dark body-skin

A dark body-skin generally indicates severe Kidney deficiency. In the past in Chinese medicine, this particular colour was called 'dark jaundice' (*hei dan*) although it has nothing to do with jaundice. In olden times, the Kidney deficiency manifesting with this colour was attributed to excessive sexual activity; for this reason, this colour was also called 'women-fatigue jaundice' (*nu lao dan*). In reality, this Kidney deficiency may be

Table 21.1 Differentiation of five types of yellow

Type	Pathology	Main symptoms	Other symptoms	Differential signs
DAMPNESS YELLOW	Dampness in space between skin and muscles	Skin dull-yellow with a 'smoky' appearance	Muscle ache or joint ache	Eyes not yellow
DULL YELLOW	Qi and Blood deficiency	Face and whole body dull-yellow	Palpitations, tiredness, loose stools, blurred vision	Eyes not yellow
STAGNANT-BLOOD YELLOW	Blood stasis	Dull, lustreless, and dry yellow body-skin	Abdominal pain	Eyes not yellow
JAUNDICE YELLOW	Dampness in Liver and Spleen, bile overflowing into skin	Body and eyes yellow	Dark urine, hypochondrial distension, nausea	Eyes yellow
THICK YELLOW	Hookworms in intestines, Qi and Blood deficiency	Whole body yellow, some paleness within the yellow	Hunger, desire to eat strange objects	Eyes not yellow

caused by other factors (such as overwork) besides excessive sexual activity.

A dark skin colour may also be caused by Blood stasis, in which case it will be dark without lustre and associated with a purple colour of the lips and nails.

SKIN COLOURS

- Pale: Qi, Yang, or Blood deficiency
- Red: Heat, Empty Heat, or Wind-Heat
- Yellow: Qi and Blood deficiency, Dampness, Damp-Heat, jaundice
- Bluish: Cold
- Greenish: Qi or Blood stagnation
- Dark: Kidney deficiency

b) Skin texture

Apart from the colour, other aspects of the skin should be considered, such as:

- lustre
- moisture
- texture
- growths

i) Lustre

Lustre in relation to the skin has already been described in the chapter on the complexion ([Chapter 3](#)). A body skin with lustre indicates a good state of body fluids and of the Lungs, Stomach, and Liver.

ii) Moisture

The moisture of the skin reflects the nourishment of the skin by body fluids and Blood; a normal moist state of the skin, therefore, reflects a healthy state of body fluids and Blood and of the Liver and Kidneys primarily.

iii) Texture

The skin should be firm but elastic, and its surface should be smooth: this reflects a healthy state of the Lungs and Spleen. A rough texture may be due to Lung-Qi deficiency, whereas if the skin feels hardened, it may indicate Dampness or Blood stasis.

iv) Growths

Growths may take the form of vesicles, papules, pustules, moles, warts, and so forth, which are described later in the chapter.

c) Skin of the forearm (inner aspect)

Besides palpation, the skin of the inner aspect of the forearm should be observed for slackness, tightness, moistness, dryness, protrusion, and shrinking.

If the inner aspect of the forearm looks slack and loose, it indicates Heat; if it is tight, it indicates Cold. If the forearm is moist, it indicates Wind invasion; if it is dry, it indicates Blood or Yin deficiency. If the forearm skin seems to be protruding, it indicates a Full condition; if it looks shrunken and withered, it indicates an Empty condition. Palpation of the forearm is discussed in [Chapter 51](#).

d) The space between the skin and the muscles (Cou Li)

The term *Cou Li* is very difficult to translate: *Cou* means 'space' and *Li* means 'stria' (e.g. the grain of wood). Together, *Cou Li* generally refers to the space between skin and muscles; that is, the superficial space above the Main channels where the Defensive-Qi flows and where sweat is present. The 'space between skin and muscles' should not be taken literally in an anatomical sense; it should be intended energetically as the superficial layer of the body where Defensive-Qi circulates.

The space between the skin and muscles (*Cou Li*) is where the Defensive-Qi flows and sweat originates.^(c) The state of the space can be deduced by observing the state of the pores, sweat, and skin texture. One should differentiate between a state of openness or closure and one of looseness or tightness.

The state of openness or closure of the space between the skin and the muscles can be judged by the presence or absence of sweating; the presence of sweating indicates that the space between the skin and muscles is open (either through Heat or Yang deficiency); its absence indicates that the space is closed.

A state of excessive openness of the space between skin and muscles facilitates the invasion of external pathogenic factors, whereas a state of excessive closure renders the person prone to fever and generally Heat.

If the skin is tight and thick, it indicates that the space between skin and muscles is tight, which is due to a Full condition of the Triple Burner and Bladder; if the skin is loose and thin, it indicates that the space between the skin and muscles is loose, which is due to an Empty condition of the Triple Burner and Bladder.

e) Body hair

The body hair indicates the state of the Lungs. One should examine its moistness, lustre, and integrity.

If the body hair is lustrous, it indicates good Lung-Qi; if it is not, it indicates weak Lung-Qi. If the body hair is strong and long, it indicates good Qi and Blood; if it is short and weak, it indicates deficiency of Qi and Blood. If the body hair is brittle and breaks easily, it indicates weak Lung-Qi.

If the body hair stands on end, it indicates an invasion of Wind-Cold. If the body hair falls off, it indicates Lung-Heat or Lung-Qi deficiency.

f) Macules

A macule, called *ban* in Chinese, is a localized, flat area of colour change without elevation or infiltration of the skin: when a finger is passed over it, the macule does not stick out. A macule can be hypopigmented, as in vitiligo; pigmented, as in a freckle; or erythematous (red), as in a capillary haemangioma (the swollen and superficial capillaries seen frequently on the legs of the elderly).

Yang macules occur in diseases of external origin, have a sudden onset, and appear first when the Heat reaches the Nutritive-Qi or Blood level. They generally appear on the chest first and are sparse and red in colour; then they gradually extend to the four limbs, becoming more dense and darker in colour as the patient grows feverish. A good prognosis is indicated by lightening of their colour, lessening of their concentration, and recession from the limbs; a poor prognosis is indicated by darkening of their colour, an increase in their density, and spread along the limbs.

Yin macules start gradually and are not associated with an external origin or a febrile disease; they are generally due either to chronic Blood Heat or to Qi deficiency.

One should differentiate the shape, density, and colour of the macules. The shape of a macule can be loose or tight; a loose macule looks like a wine stain and indicates a good prognosis, whereas a 'tight' macule looks like the tip of a knitting needle and indicates that Toxic Heat and Blood Heat are severe and the prognosis is poor.

The density of macules is also important; the more dense they are, the more intense is the Blood Heat.

As for the colour, one should differentiate the following colours of macules:

- Red
- Purple
- Black
- White

i) Red macules

Red macules always indicate Heat. In the course of a febrile disease, they appear at the Nutritive-Qi or Blood level, and they should always be considered a dangerous sign. Meningitis is an example of an acute febrile disease that manifests with macules when it reaches the Nutritive-Qi or Blood level.

Macules can be differentiated from papules (see below) by pressing on them; if the lesions disappear on pressure, they are papules; if not, they are macules. A good method is to use a glass – if the spot disappears when the side of a glass is pressed against it, it is a papule; if it does not, it is a macule.

In the course of acute febrile diseases, especially in children, it is vital to distinguish papules from macules because the latter indicate the progression of a disease to the Blood level, which is always a dangerous sign. For example, if a child falls ill with meningitis, the appearance of macules is a dangerous sign and should always be taken seriously. The darker the macules, the more intense the Blood Heat.



Remember: In the course of an acute febrile disease, especially in children, it is vital to distinguish between papules and macules. Papules disappear when the side of a glass is pressed against them; macules do not.

ii) Purple macules

Purple macules indicate Blood Heat with Blood stasis (Figs. 21.4 and 21.5).

iii) Black macules

Black macules indicate very severe Blood Heat and a dangerous condition. If they are black but bright and clear, the condition, although severe, can be treated. If they are black, dark, and murky, it indicates that there is severe Blood Heat and Toxic Heat, the condition is dangerous, and the prognosis poor. If they are black, dull, unclear, and edged with red, it indicates that, although the illness is severe, the patient can be treated.



Figure 21.4. Purple macules. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.6. Wheals. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.5. Macules on lips. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)

iv) White macules

White macules may indicate Qi and Blood stagnation, Blood deficiency, or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

g) Papules

A papule, in Chinese called *qiu zhen*, is a small, solid, and usually well-demarcated elevation of the skin, generally defined as less than 5 mm in diameter. Papules

may be flat-topped, as in lichen planus, or dome-shaped, as in acne.

Red papules always indicate Heat. The Heat may be in any organ, but the most frequent locations are the Lungs and Stomach. In terms of levels, the Heat manifested by papules may be at any level (i.e. external Wind-Heat, Heat at the Qi level or Heat at the Blood level). Papules frequently reflect Heat combined with Dampness or Phlegm.

Dark-red or purple papules indicate Heat with Blood stasis. Chronic papular eruptions may be due to Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness. Papules with a crust indicate Blood or Yin deficiency.

A wheal, called *feng tuan* in Chinese, is a type of papule (although it may also be a plaque) characterized by a transitory, compressible elevation of the skin with dermal oedema, red or white in colour; urticaria is a typical example of skin eruptions with wheals. Pale wheals are caused by invasion of Wind-Cold or Yang deficiency; red wheals are caused by Heat or Empty Heat; dark, purple wheals indicate Blood stasis (Fig. 21.6).

A plaque, in Chinese called *ban*, is a type of papule: it is a palpable, plateau-like elevation of the skin, usually more than 2 cm in diameter. Certain psoriasis lesions are typical examples of plaques. The clinical significance of plaques is the same as that of papules; that is, red plaques signify Heat, whereas dark ones indicate Heat with Blood stasis. The fact that the Chinese name for plaques is the same as that for macule (*ban*) should not induce us to infer that plaques indicate Blood Heat (as macules do) (Fig. 21.7).



Figure 21.7. Plaques. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

h) Vesicles

A vesicle, in Chinese called *shui pao*, is a small blister (usually less than 5 mm in diameter) consisting of clear fluid that has accumulated within or below the epidermis. A vesicle larger than 5 mm is called a *bull* (Fig. 21.8).

Vesicles are a classic sign of Dampness; large ones usually indicate Damp-Heat, and small ones indicate Dampness with underlying Spleen deficiency.

Table 21.2 differentiates between macules, papules, and vesicles.

i) Pustules

A pustule, in Chinese called *nong pao*, is a visible collection of free pus in a blister. Pustules may indicate infection (as in a furuncle or infected eczema), but this is not always the case; for example, the pustules seen in psoriasis are not infected.



Figure 21.8. Vesicles. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)

Table 21.2 Differentiation of macules, papules, and vesicles

	Shape	Distribution	Aftermath
MACULES	Large spots, level with skin, cannot be felt on touch, do not disappear on pressure	Chest, abdomen, back, face most of all; seldom on limbs	Do not leave trace
PAPULES	Like small grains or beans, sticking out, can be felt on palpation, disappear on pressure	Same as above	Leave trace
VESICLES	Round, small spots filled with fluid, usually white, shaped like grains of rice or sometimes like pearls; can be felt on palpation	Chest, abdomen, axillae, neck; seldom on limbs	Leave trace

Pustules usually indicate Toxic Heat or Damp-Heat mixed with Toxic Heat. The Heat is often related to the Lungs, Stomach, or Spleen (Fig. 21.9).

j) Dry skin

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The most common cause of dry skin is Liver-Blood deficiency; this is especially common in women. Liver-Yin and Kidney-Yin deficiency are a common cause of dry



Figure 21.9. Pustule. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

skin in the elderly. In some cases, dry skin may be due to Stomach-Yin deficiency.

A particular type of dry skin is due to chronic Blood stasis. It results from the interaction and mutual exchange of Blood and Body Fluids; stagnant Blood may impair the circulation of body fluids, and this may cause the skin to become dry. Dry skin from Blood stasis occurs only in chronic cases when the Blood stasis is severe, and it is more common in the elderly. It is fairly easy to distinguish between dry skin due to Blood stasis and that due to Yin or Blood deficiency because in the former case, the skin is also dark and lacks lustre and the nails are often dark or purple and dry and withered; apart from that, there will be some general symptoms and signs of Blood stasis.

DRY SKIN

- Liver-Blood deficiency
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Stomach-Yin deficiency
- Chronic Blood stasis

k) Greasy skin

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

Greasy skin is always due either to Dampness or Phlegm. The greasy skin from Phlegm is usually accompanied by a certain 'puffiness' of the skin.

l) Swelling of the skin

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Observation, [Chapter 18](#); Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

Swelling of the skin may be due to accumulation of fluids under the skin, as in oedema, stagnation of Qi, or Dampness. Excluding the swelling due to Dampness, there are two main types of oedema: 'Water oedema' (*Shui Zhong*) and 'Qi oedema' (*Qi Zhong*).

Water oedema is due to accumulation of fluids in the space between the skin and muscles, usually from a dysfunction of the Lungs (not diffusing fluids), Spleen (not transforming fluids), and Kidneys (not transforming and excreting fluids). With Water oedema, there is pitting. Usually a distinction is made between Yang Water oedema, which has an acute onset, is of external origin, and affects the top part of the body (usually with involvement of the Lungs), and Yin Water oedema, which has a slow onset, is of internal origin, and affects the middle and lower parts of the body (usually with involvement of the Spleen and Kidneys).

Qi oedema is due to Qi stagnation in the space between the skin and muscles, and there is no pitting on pressure. It may also be due to Dampness or Phlegm obstructing the space between the skin and muscles and impairing the Spleen's transformation and transportation of fluids, in which case there may be pitting.

A third, less common, type of skin swelling is due to Blood stasis; this is called **Blood oedema**. In this case, the skin is swollen, dark, purple, and without lustre. This swelling is often associated with joint pain.

OEDEMA OF THE SKIN

- Water oedema: Lung, Spleen, and Kidney deficiency
- Qi oedema: Qi stagnation, Dampness, or Phlegm
- Blood oedema: Blood stasis

m) Scales

A scale, called *lin xiao* in Chinese, is an accumulation of thickened, horny-layer keratin in the form of readily detached fragments. Scales usually indicate an inflammatory change and thickening of the epidermis. They may be fine, as in pityriasis; white and silvery, as in psoriasis; or large and resembling fish scales, as in ichthyosis ([Fig. 21.10](#)).



Figure 21.10. Scales. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

In chronic skin diseases, dry scales are usually due to deficient and dry Blood, giving rise to Wind; it should be noted here that 'Wind' in the context of skin diseases is different from external Wind or internal Wind. In acute or sub-acute skin diseases, scales may be due to Heat and will therefore also appear in Damp-Heat. One should not assume that scales cannot appear when there is Dampness; eczema is a typical example of this situation. Oily scales are due to the accumulation of Damp-Heat.

n) Erosion of the skin

Skin erosion is a superficial break in the epidermis that does not extend into the dermis and that heals without scarring. Erosion is often seen after the appearance of vesicles or pustules.

Red erosion with oozing of a yellow fluid indicates Damp-Heat. Erosion with an exudate of thick yellow fluid indicates Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat. Erosion with oozing of thin-watery fluids indicates Dampness with underlying Spleen deficiency.

o) Rashes

A rash, called *zhen* in Chinese, is a redness of the skin caused by vaso-dilatation. The Western medical name is *erythema*. The main rashes to be differentiated are measles, German measles, chickenpox, and urticaria.

i) Measles, German measles, and chickenpox

Measles (morbilli), called 'Hemp Rash' (*ma zhen*) in Chinese, was once a common childhood infection. It is now rare in developed countries, but in developing countries it is still common and still a major cause of child mortality.

German measles (rubella), called 'Wind Rash' (*feng zhen*) in Chinese, is a common childhood infection with a benign course.

Chickenpox (varicella), called 'Water Pox' (*shui dou*) in Chinese, is a common childhood infection characterized by Dampness.

The differentiation of the rash in these three diseases is shown in [Table 21.3](#).

p) Fissures

A fissure (or crack) is a linear split in the epidermis, often just extending into the dermis. From the Chinese point of view, fissures are due to a disharmony of Qi and Blood, Blood deficiency, or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

q) Skin ulcers

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

An ulcer is a circumscribed area of skin loss extending through the epidermis into the dermis ([Figs. 21.11](#) and [21.12](#)). Ulcers are usually the result of impairment of the vascular nutrient supply to the skin, often due to peripheral arterial disease. Ulcer formation is preceded by itching, pain, erythema, oedema, breakage of the skin, and oozing. When the ulcer is formed, there is loss of epidermis; as the ulcer progresses, the opening becomes wider and deeper.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

In Chinese medicine, two types of ulcers are described: *Yang* ulcers, which have edges that protrude clearly, are clearly defined, and are shaped like a basin; and *Yin*

Table 21.3 Differentiation of measles, German measles, and chickenpox

	Measles	German measles	Chickenpox
General symptoms	High fever, cough, listlessness	Low fever, child not so ill, swelling of glands behind ears	Low fever, child not so ill
Onset of rash	Appears gradually, about 3 days after onset	Appears rather suddenly, complete in 24 hours	Appears after 1-2 days
Colour of rash	Dark-red	Pale-red	White, red around edge
Shape of papules	Protruding, large or small, first loosely distributed, then dense	Small, round, loosely and evenly distributed, cause itching	Round, ranging in size from rice grain to bean, filled with fluid
Distribution of rash	First behind ears and neck, then face, trunk, limbs, hands, and feet; densely distributed.	First on face, then trunk, limbs, not on hands and feet; they can resolve quickly	Face, trunk, limbs, very few on hands or feet
Leaves marks	Yes	No	Leaves concavities

ulcers, which do not have protruding edges, are shallower, have edges that are not clearly defined, and produce more oozing. Yang ulcers are predominantly caused by a Full condition and have a better prognosis than Yin ulcers, which are characterized by a mixture of Deficiency and Excess.

The main patterns giving rise to ulcers are accumulation of Damp-Heat, Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness, Qi stagnation and Blood stasis, and Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Ulcers caused by Damp-Heat are characterized by hardened and rounded edges and oozing of a thick-yellow fluid.

Ulcers caused by Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness are characterized by a greyish-white tissue inside the ulcer and oozing of a clear fluid.



Figure 21.11. Ulcer. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.12. Ulcer. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

Ulcers caused by Qi stagnation and Blood stasis are characterized by surrounding skin swelling with a purple colour, pain, and varicosities.

Ulcers caused by Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency are characterized by deep-red surrounding skin and absence of pain.

SKIN ULCERS

- Hardened with round edges and oozing of thick-yellow fluids: Damp-Heat
- Greyish-white tissue and oozing of clear fluid: Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness
- Swelling of surrounding skin, purple colour, pain, and varicosities: Qi stagnation or Blood stasis
- Deep-red surrounding skin, no pain: Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

r) Dermographism

Dermographism (literally meaning 'writing on the skin') indicates the red wheals that may appear when the skin is stroked with a hard object, such as the end of a pencil or a nail. From the Western point of view, this is due to the exaggerated release of histamine from the mast cells in the skin; it occurs in atopic individuals and is due to the presence of abnormal levels of immunoglobulin E (IgE) around the mast cells of the skin (Fig. 21.13).

From a Chinese perspective, dermatographism indicates the presence of Wind in the skin, often Wind-Heat. If the patient suffers from atopic eczema, it indicates that Wind-Heat predominates; if the patient suffers from allergic asthma, it indicates that there is Wind and Heat in the Lungs.



Figure 21.13. Dermographism. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.14. Acute eczema. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

2. SKIN DISEASES

The following skin diseases will be discussed:

- EczeMa
- Acne
- Psoriasis
- Urticaria
- Naevi
- Malignant melanoma
- Tinea
- Candida
- Herpes simplex
- Herpes zoster
- Warts

a) EczeMa

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapters 77, 89

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

EczeMa is the commonest skin disease seen in practice (Figs. 21.14–21.23). In the United Kingdom, eczeMa

and acne make up the highest proportion of skin diseases; in general practice, eczeMa accounts for 30% of patients presenting with a skin problem. A complete discussion of the aetiology and pathology of eczeMa (both from a Western and a Chinese point of view) is beyond the scope of this book, and I will concentrate on the diagnostic aspects; that is, how to recognize eczeMa and differentiate it from other skin diseases. This is not a simple task because there are very many different types of eczeMa presenting in many different ways. In Western medicine, the term 'dermatitis' now is generally preferred to 'eczeMa.'

The most commonly seen eczeMa in practice is atopic eczeMa in children and babies. In babies, there is usually an exudative, vesicular rash on the face and hands. After



Figure 21.15. Chronic eczema. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.17. Atopic eczema. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.16. Atopic eczema. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.18. Atopic eczema. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

18 months, the pattern changes to the familiar involvement of the elbow and knee creases, neck, wrists and ankles. The face often shows erythema and infraorbital folds. Lichenification (from scratching), excoriation, and dry skin are common, and palmar markings are increased. Scratching and rubbing cause most of the clinical signs.

In adults, the commonest manifestation is hand dermatitis, exacerbated by irritants, especially in patients with a past history of atopic eczema. A small number of adults have a chronic, severe form of generalized and lichenified atopic eczema. Exacerbations are often elicited by stress.

It should be remembered that many acute, sudden exacerbations are due to skin infection from *Staphylococcus aureus* rather than to the eczema itself; skin infections



Figure 21.19. Atopic eczema. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.20. Atopic eczema with lichenification. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

in eczema are common because the skin is excoriated and therefore prone to invasion of bacteria. An acute infection is characterized by sudden aggravation of the eczema, a papular or pustular rash, and pronounced erythema.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

The modern Chinese name for eczema, 'Damp Rash' (*shi zhen*), clearly indicates the idea that Dampness is always present in eczema.



Remember: In eczema, there is always Dampness, even if the skin is not oozing.

Acute eczema is characterized by intense itching, vesicles, and erythema (redness) and swelling of the skin. Chronic eczema is characterized by itching, erythema, swelling of the skin, crusting, scaling, lichenification (thickening of the skin with increased skin markings), excoriation, and erosion; it may be weeping or dry.



Figure 21.21. Chronic atopic eczema.

Weeping eczema indicates the predominance of Dampness, whereas dry eczema indicates the predominance of Heat. However, it should be remembered that in eczema, there is always some Dampness because there are always fluid-filled vesicles under the epidermis (which causes the swelling of the skin); when these vesicles come to the surface, the eczema weeps.



Figure 21.22. Chronic eczema (infected).



Figure 21.23. Chronic eczema (infected).

Furthermore, in atopic dermatitis the superficial stratum corneum of the skin is damaged, so the skin cannot hold moisture properly; this means that the skin becomes dry as a consequence rather than as a cause of the eczema.

The main pattern seen in atopic eczema is Damp-Heat, with one or the other factor predominant. If Dampness predominates, the eczema is weeping; if Heat predominates, the eczema is dry (bear in mind, however, that in dry eczema there is Dampness, too). In chronic eczema in adults, there is also Damp-Heat, but the condition also is characterized by Empty conditions, primarily a Spleen deficiency and a Blood deficiency, and dryness, with Blood failing to nourish the skin. Itching is caused by the Dampness or, in chronic cases, by the Wind generated by the Blood deficiency.

Wind also plays a role in chronic eczema in combination with Damp-Heat. Wind will manifest with the location of the rash on the upper part of the body and

with intense itching. In chronic eczema in adults, Wind is also generated by the deficiency and dryness of the Blood.

If the skin oozes a yellow fluid, it indicates the prevalence of Damp-Heat; if it oozes a clear fluid, it indicates Dampness against a background of Spleen deficiency. If the skin oozes after scratching, it also indicates Dampness, whereas if it bleeds after scratching, it indicates Blood Heat.

Case History

A 29-year-old woman had been suffering from atopic eczema since she was a few months old. The manifestations were typical of atopic eczema: a dry, red rash, scaliness, thickening of the skin, and intense itching. The location of the eczema was only on the top part of the body. The eczema became worse during a pregnancy and after childbirth. Her eczema was also aggravated with cyclical regularity every 7 years. Her tongue was slightly Red, with red points on the front part, a Stomach crack and not enough tongue coating. Her pulse was very Weak on the right-Front position and Overflowing on the left at the middle level. She was very thin and restless, tapping her fingers on the table as she talked.

Diagnosis

The immediate presenting pattern of the eczema is Empty Heat in the Blood with Wind-Heat in the skin. The Empty Heat in the Blood is manifested by the red, dry rash and the Red of the tongue without enough coating; the Wind-Heat is manifested by the intense itching and the location of the eczema on the top part of the body. There is also a Yin deficiency of the Lungs and Stomach, manifested by the Stomach crack and Weak pulse on the right-Front position. The Yin deficiency is also manifested by the thin body and by her restless behaviour (i.e. tapping her fingers on the table as she talked).

Underlying this, there is also a deficiency of the Defensive-Qi systems of the Lungs and Kidneys, especially of the Lungs; this is manifested by the Weak pulse on the right-Front position and by the aggravation of the eczema during pregnancy and after childbirth. An interesting feature of this case is the cyclical aggravation of the eczema every 7 years, which is in perfect accordance with the Chinese view on 7-year cycles in a woman's life as described in the first chapter of the 'Simple Questions'.

b) Acne

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 55 and 77](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

Acne is a chronic inflammation of the pilosebaceous units that produces comedones; then papules, pustules, or cysts; and, possibly, eventually scars ([Figs. 21.24–21.27](#)). Acne has an equal sex incidence but tends to affect women earlier than men, although the peak age for clinical acne is 18 years in both sexes.

As for the clinical presentation, comedones are either open (blackheads, which are dilated pores with black plugs of melanin-containing keratin) or closed (whiteheads, which are small, cream-coloured, dome-shaped papules). They appear at about the age of 12 years and evolve into inflammatory papules, pustules, or cysts. The sites of predilection (face, shoulders, back and upper chest) have many sebaceous glands. The severity of acne depends on its extent and the type of lesion; cysts are the most destructive. Scars may follow healing, especially with cysts.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

From the Chinese perspective, the main causes of acne are:

- **Lung-Heat:** characterized by whiteheads and blackheads, usually on the forehead, around the nose, and on the upper back and chest.
- **Stomach-Heat:** characterized by whiteheads and blackheads, usually around the mouth and on the chest and upper back.



Figure 21.24. Papular-pustular acne. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

- **Blood Heat:** characterized by red papules, usually around the nose, mouth, and eyebrows. This type of acne is often worse before and during menstruation.
- **Toxic Heat:** characterized by pustules, which may be painful. It may also manifest with inflamed cysts. The most frequently affected sites are the upper back and chest.
- **Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat and Blood stasis:** characterized by deep, painful, inflamed nodules and



Figure 21.25. Pustular acne. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.26. Scarring acne. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.27. Inflammatory acne. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)

pus-filled cysts. This type usually leaves pitting and scarring.

- Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency: often an underlying condition combined with Dampness and characterized by long-lasting papules, which take a long time to resolve.



TREATMENT NOTE

Although acne in most cases is due to Damp-Heat, I think that there is also a disharmony of the Directing and/or Penetrating Vessel. That explains the onset of acne usually in adolescence. Thus, although I treat Damp-Heat, Toxic Heat, or Blood stasis, I also regulate the Directing Vessel with LU-7 Lieque, KI-6 Zhaohai, and Ren-4 Guanyuan or the Penetrating Vessel with SP-4 Gongsun, P-6 Neiguan, and Ren-4 Guanyuan.



Figure 21.28. Psoriasis with scaly plaques. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

c) Psoriasis

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

Psoriasis is a chronic, non-infectious, inflammatory dermatosis characterized by well-demarcated, erythematous plaques topped by silvery scales. The peak onset of psoriasis is in the second and third decades. It is unusual in children under age 8.

About 35% of patients show a family history of the disease. If one of a child's parents has psoriasis, there is a 25% probability that the child will be similarly affected; this probability increases to 60% if both parents have psoriasis.

Psoriasis ranges in appearance from the typical chronic plaques involving the elbows to the acute, generalized pustular form. There are many different types of psoriasis ([Figs. 21.28–21.34](#)):

- Plaque type: this consists of well-defined, disc-shaped plaques involving the elbows, knees, scalp, or hair margin.
- Guttate type: this is an acute, symmetrical eruption of 'drop-like' lesions, usually on the trunk and limbs. This form usually affects adolescents or young adults and may follow a streptococcal throat infection.
- Flexural type: this affects the flexures of the axillae, the areas under the breasts, and the groin. It is usually seen in the elderly.
- Localized type: this may be seen on the palms and soles, fingers and nails, and scalp.
- Generalized pustular type: this is a rare type of psoriasis characterized by pustules all over the

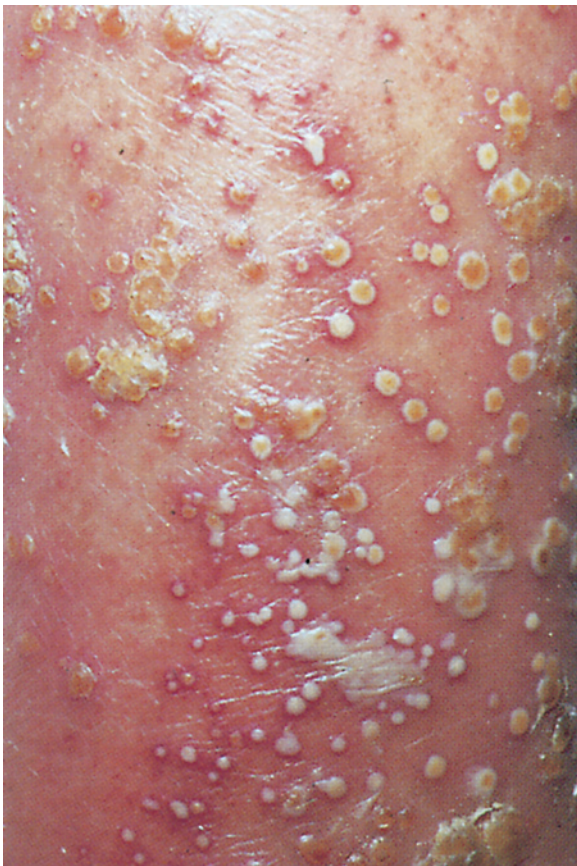


Figure 21.29. Pustular psoriasis. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.30. Psoriasis of scalp. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.31. Psoriasis with pale plaques (Blood deficiency).



Figure 21.32. Psoriasis with bright-red plaques (Blood Heat and Dryness). (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.33. Psoriasis with purple lesions (Blood Heat and Blood stasis). (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

body. Sheets of small, sterile, yellowish pustules develop on an erythematous background and may spread rapidly. The onset is often acute and the patient is unwell, with fever and malaise.

- Type affecting the nails: thimble pitting is the commonest change in this type of psoriasis, followed by separation of the distal edge of the nail from the nail bed. There is sub-ungual hyperkeratosis with a build-up of keratin beneath the distal edge of the nail, mostly affecting the toenails.
- Psoriatic arthritis: this is an auto-immune disease characterized by the simultaneous occurrence of psoriasis and arthritis, a condition that resembles rheumatoid arthritis.

Another diagnostic sign of psoriasis is Auspitz's sign, which is seen when scraping of the superficial scales typically reveals tiny bleeding points.

Because there are many types of psoriasis, other skin diseases may easily be wrongly diagnosed as psoriasis. [Table 21.4](#) illustrates the differential diagnosis of the most common types of psoriasis (i.e. for each type of psoriasis, the table lists other skin diseases that may look like that type). Although Chinese medicine treats skin diseases primarily according to the presenting pattern and not according to the type of skin disease, in the particular case of psoriasis, it is important to differentiate it from other diseases because of its prognosis (i.e. psoriasis is usually more difficult to treat).



Figure 21.34. Psoriasis with pale and dry-scaly plaques (Blood Deficient and Dry with Wind). (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

Table 21.4 Differential diagnosis of various types of psoriasis

Type of psoriasis	Differential diagnosis
Plaque psoriasis	Psoriasisform drug eruption
Palmo-plantar psoriasis	Hyperkeratotic eczema, Reiter's disease
Scalp psoriasis	Seborrhoeic dermatitis
Guttate psoriasis	Pityriasis rosea
Flexural psoriasis	Candidiasis of the flexures
Nail psoriasis	Fungal infection of the nails

**Figure 21.35.** Urticaria. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)**Figure 21.36.** Urticaria. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

The patterns causing psoriasis are:

- **Blood Heat:** this is characterized by red macules or papules that increase in size and proliferate rapidly. Red scales pile up and are easily shed when scratched.
- **Blood deficient and dry:** this is characterized by pale and very dry plaques that are covered by a thin layer of white scales. The course of the disease is slow, and new lesions appear sporadically.
- **Blood stasis:** this is characterized by dark-purple plaques covered by thick scales. In chronic psoriasis only, lichenification may appear.
- **Damp-Heat:** this is characterized by dark-red macules or papules covered by greasy or thick, crust-like scales. The skin weeps, and there may also be pustules. The sites affected are usually the palms, soles, and skin flexures.
- **Toxic Heat:** this is characterized by erythematous or pustular lesions that develop and spread rapidly, often piling up together. There are red scales that shed easily, and the patient has itching, burning, and pain.
- **Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency:** this is characterized by pale-red macules covered by a thin layer of greyish-white scales. A chronic condition, it is usually seen in the elderly.

In addition to the above patterns, there is also nearly always Wind in psoriasis. Wind causes intense itching and also dryness: thus, it is important to

remember that dryness is not always a symptom of Blood deficiency.

d) Urticaria

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

Urticaria is a skin eruption characterized by transient, itchy wheals due to acute, dermal oedema (Figs. 21.35 and 21.36). The cause is an allergic reaction. The lesions result when mast cells release histamine, which produces vasodilatation and the characteristic wheals.

Urticaria can be acute or chronic. Acute urticaria is typically due to an IgE-mediated type I reaction. The

allergen is usually a food (e.g. shellfish or peanuts) or a drug. In some cases urticaria may also be due to insect stings or bites, desensitizing injections, or inhalants, such as pollen, moulds, or animal dander. Some women develop urticaria during menstruation. Acute urticaria normally manifests with a sudden onset of red and very itchy wheals, which rapidly spread all over the body. The lesions may be small or may enlarge to as big as 20 cm across. Chronic urticaria is characterized by pale-red or pink, itchy wheals that typically last less than 24 hours and disappear without a trace. Often no allergen can be identified. Urticaria may also be caused by exposure to cold, heat, or sunlight.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

In Chinese medicine, urticaria is called *feng yin zhen*, which means 'Wind hidden rash'. In both acute and chronic urticaria, there is usually an underlying pattern of Wind in the skin. A very common pattern, 'Wind' in the skin manifests primarily with intense itching, either all over the body or moving from place to place, and in chronic cases (e.g. psoriasis), with dryness of the skin. Just as wind, in nature, dries up the soil, Wind in the skin may dry up the skin in chronic cases. Wind in the skin is neither an external type of Wind (because it does not cause exterior symptoms, such as aversion to cold, or fever) nor an internal type of Wind (because it does not cause tremors or paralysis).

In acute urticaria, Wind, especially Wind-Heat, predominates. It causes intense itching with sudden onset and red wheals that spread rapidly; the more intense the itching, the stronger the Wind. In chronic urticaria, Wind may be combined with a Stomach and Spleen deficiency and Dampness, which usually makes the patient prone to food allergies. In this case, the wheals may exude a clear fluid, the itching is less intense, and the wheals come and go in a chronic course. In chronic cases, Wind in the skin frequently occurs as a result of deficiency and dryness of Blood. In such cases, the wheals may be pale-red and the itching is less intense than in acute urticaria. This condition is more common in women and may be associated with menstruation or may arise after childbirth.

Both acute and chronic urticaria may be accompanied by Blood-Heat; in these cases, the wheals are very large and bright-red and, besides the itching, the patient has an intense feeling of heat and the skin is very hot to the touch. Finally, chronic urticaria may be complicated

by Blood stasis, in which case the wheals are purple and may last a long time.

URTICARIA

- Intense itching, sudden onset, red wheals that spread rapidly: Wind-Heat
- Wheals exude a clear fluid, less intense itching, wheals come and go: Wind, Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency, Dampness
- Pale red wheals, less intense itching: deficiency and dryness of Blood
- Large, bright-red wheals, itching, feeling of heat, skin hot to touch: Blood-Heat
- Purple wheals that last a long time: Blood stasis

e) Naevi

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

A naevus is a benign proliferation of one or more of the normal constituent cells of the skin. Naevi may be present at birth or may develop later. The most common naevi are those containing a benign collection of melanocytic naevus cells, commonly known as moles.

The differentiation between moles and other types of skin lesions is illustrated in [Table 21.5](#) (also see [Fig. 21.37](#)).

Table 21.5 Differentiation of naevi

Lesion	Distinguishing features
Freckle	Tan-coloured macules on sun-exposed sites
Lentigine	Usually multiple with onset in later life
Seborrheic wart	Stuck-on appearance, warty lesions, easily confused with moles
Haemangioma	Vascular but may show pigmentation
Dermatofibroma	On legs, firm and pigmented
Pigmented, basal cell carcinoma	Often on face, pearly edge, increases in size, may ulcerate
Malignant melanoma	Variable colour and outline, increases in size, may be inflamed or itchy



Figure 21.37. Naevus (spider angioma). (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

Moles that are present from birth are an inherited trait without any clinical significance. Moles that develop later in life generally indicate Liver-Blood Heat, Damp-Heat or Blood stasis (if they are dark).

CHINESE PATHOLOGY OF MOLES

- Blood-Heat (Liver)
- Damp-Heat
- Blood stasis

f) Malignant melanoma

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

ii) Western pathology and diagnosis

Malignant melanoma is a malignant tumour of melanocytes, usually arising in the epidermis ([Figs.](#)



Figure 21.38. Malignant melanoma. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

[21.38–21.42](#)). It is the most lethal of the main skin tumours and has increased in incidence over the past few years. It is particularly common in Australia, accounting for 40% of common dermatological disorders (compared to 7% in the UK).

There are four main variants of malignant melanoma:

- Superficial, spreading, malignant melanoma: characterized by macules, particularly on the legs; more common in females (50% of UK cases).
- Lentigo, malignant melanoma: characterized by dark macules, especially on the face; particularly seen in the elderly (15% of UK cases).
- Acral, lentiginous, malignant melanoma: characterized by plaques, particularly on the palms and soles (10% of UK cases).
- Nodular, malignant melanoma: characterized by pigmented nodules that may grow rapidly and ulcerate (25% of UK cases).

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

In Chinese medicine, malignant melanomas are usually due to Blood-Heat and Blood stasis; the darker their colour, the more Blood stasis there is. The differentiation is also made on the basis of the skin lesion. Macules always indicate Blood-Heat with Blood stasis, plaques indicate Blood-Heat with Damp-Heat, and nodules indicate Blood stasis.

CHINESE PATHOLOGY OF MELANOMA

- Macules: Blood-Heat with Blood stasis
- Plaques: Blood-Heat with Damp-Heat
- Nodules: Blood stasis



Figure 21.39. Malignant melanoma. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.40. Malignant melanoma. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.41. Malignant melanoma. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

g) Tinea

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

The most common fungal infection is tinea. Tinea presents with disc-like lesions consisting of a clearly defined, round erythema that expands outwards and often is clear in the centre; there is itching and some scaling ([Figs. 21.43–21.48](#)). There are many types of tinea, including the following:

- Tinea corporis (of the body): characterized by single or multiple plaques with scaling and erythema, especially at the edges. The lesions enlarge slowly with central clearing, leaving a ring pattern, hence the name *ringworm*. It may also manifest with pustules or vesicles.
- Tinea cruris (of the groin): characterized by scaling and erythema in the groin area that spreads to the upper thigh.
- Tinea manuum (of the hand): characterized by a unilateral, diffuse, powdery scaling of the palm.
- Tinea capitis (of the head): characterized by an inflamed, pustular swelling of the scalp.
- Tinea pedis (athlete's foot): characterized by an itchy, inter-digital maceration with vesicles.
- Tinea unguium (of the nails): characterized by separation of the nail from the nail bed; thickening and brittleness of the nail, which becomes yellow; and sub-ungual hyperkeratosis.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

From the Chinese point of view, tinea of the head may be due to Wind-Heat, Damp-Heat, or Toxic Heat, whereas

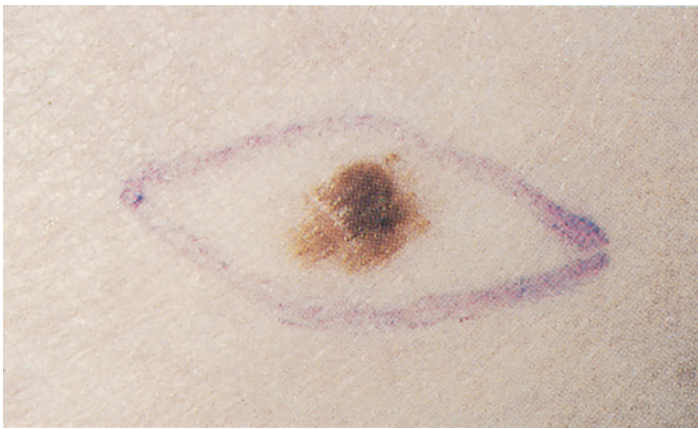


Figure 21.42. Malignant melanoma. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.43. Tinea corporis. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.44. Tinea corporis. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.45. Tinea manuum. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.46. Tinea capitis. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.48. Tinea cruris. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)

tinea of the other parts of the body is mostly due to Damp-Heat or Toxic Heat. When due to Wind-Heat, tinea affects the head and may move from place to place. When due to Damp-Heat, tinea is characterized by a red and moist rash with vesicles that usually has a fixed location but may spread slowly. When it is due to Toxic Heat, tinea is characterized by an intensely red rash with red papules that spreads quickly.

CHINESE PATHOLOGY OF TINEA

- Wind-Heat: tinea of head
- Damp-Heat: red rash with vesicles
- Toxic Heat: intensely red rash with papules



Figure 21.47. Tinea pedis. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)

h) Candida

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

Candida albicans is a physiological fungus that is found in the mouth and gastro-intestinal tract (Figs. 21.49 and 21.50). When it multiplies too rapidly, it can produce opportunistic infections. Predisposing factors include:

- moist skin folds
- obesity
- diabetes mellitus
- pregnancy
- poor hygiene
- humid environment
- wet work occupation
- use of broad-spectrum antibiotics
- excessive consumption of sugar



Figure 21.49. *Candida albicans*. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.50. *Candida albicans*. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)

Infections by *C. albicans* may affect the following areas:

- **Genitals:** characterized by itchiness, soreness, and redness of the vulva and vagina in women ('thrush'). White plaques adhere to inflamed mucous membranes, and a white vaginal discharge may occur. Men develop similar changes on the penis. Thrush can be spread by sexual intercourse.
- **Flexures:** characterized by a moist, glazed, and macerated appearance of the flexures under the breasts in women, in the axilla, groin, or between the fingers or toes.
- **Oral mucosa:** characterized by white plaques that adhere to an erythematous mouth mucosa. This is often caused by use of broad-spectrum antibiotics.

- **Systemic:** characterized by red nodules on the skin; this occurs in immuno-suppressed patients, such as those who have acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or those undergoing long-term corticosteroid therapy.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

From the Chinese point of view, fungal infections are usually caused by Dampness, which may be combined either with Cold or Heat but more frequently is combined with Heat. Acute fungal infections are usually due to Damp-Heat, whereas chronic fungal infections are characterized by Dampness and always occur against a background of chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency. *Candida* infections of the gastro-intestinal system often manifest on the tongue with small, peeled patches with a white ring around them and a white-sticky coating between.

i) Herpes simplex

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

Herpes is a viral infection of which there are two types: herpes simplex, which is due to infection by *Herpesvirus hominis*, and herpes zoster (shingles, which is due to infection by *Varicella zoster*).

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

Herpes simplex is a common, acute, vesicular eruption that is highly contagious (Figs. 21.51 and 21.52). After the primary infection, the latent, non-replicating virus resides mainly within the dorsal root ganglia, from where it can reactivate, invade the skin, and cause recurrent lesions. There are two types of herpes simplex virus: type one is usually facial, and type two usually genital. Type one infection manifests with vesicles on the lips and around the mouth; they quickly erode and are painful. The illness may be accompanied by fever, malaise, and local lymphadenopathy. Type two infection usually occurs after sexual contact in young adults who develop acute vulvovaginitis, penile, or perianal lesions. Recurrent attacks are the hallmark of herpes simplex infection, and they occur at a similar site each time, usually on the lips, face, or genitals. The outbreak of vesicles is often preceded by tingling or burning, crusts form within 48 hours, and the infection fades after a week.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

From the Chinese point of view, herpes simplex is nearly always characterized by Damp-Heat because vesicles by



Figure 21.51. Herpes simplex. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

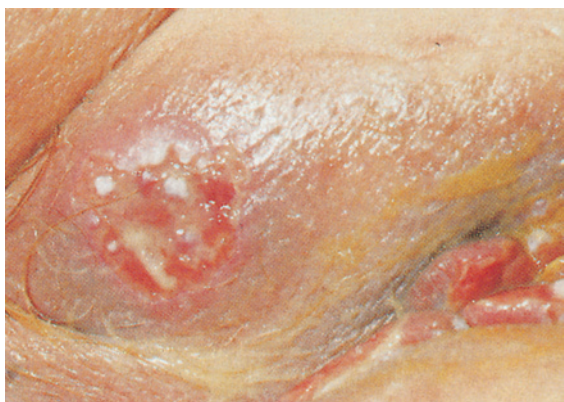


Figure 21.52. Herpes simplex. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

definition indicate Dampness. However, different types may be distinguished according to the manifestations and location of the lesions. Lesions occurring in the upper part of the body (e.g. lips and mouth) are due to a combination of Damp-Heat and Wind-Heat; lesions that occur regularly and repeatedly around the mouth and on the lips may be due to Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen, whereas genital lesions are due to Damp-Heat mostly in the Liver channel. In the elderly, recurrent herpes simplex infections often occur against a background of Yin deficiency and Empty Heat, so that there is an underlying Empty Heat that predisposes the person to recurrent infection and Damp-Heat in the acute stages. If the eruptions become pustular or papular and are very painful, they indicate the presence both of Toxic Heat and of Damp-Heat.

CHINESE PATHOLOGY OF HERPES SIMPLEX

- Damp-Heat with Wind-Heat: lesions in the upper body
- Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen: lesions around the mouth
- Damp-Heat in Liver channel: genital lesions
- Damp-Heat with Yin deficiency and Empty Heat: recurrent infections in the elderly
- Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat: painful papular or pustular eruptions

j) Herpes zoster

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

ii) Western pathology and diagnosis

Herpes zoster is an acute vesicular eruption occurring in the dermatomal distribution caused by a recrudescence of the *V. zoster* virus ([Fig. 21.53](#)). It nearly always occurs in people who have had varicella (chickenpox). Pain, tenderness, and tingling in the dermatome precede the eruption by 3 to 5 days. Erythema and grouped vesicles follow, scattered within the dermatomal area. The vesicles become pustular and then form crusts, which separate in 2 to 3 weeks to leave scarring. Herpes zoster is normally unilateral, and two thirds of patients are over 50 years of age.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

From the Chinese point of view, herpes zoster is also always due to Damp-Heat because of its vesicular and erythematous eruption, but a further differentiation can be made according to the manifestations and location



Figure 21.53. Herpes zoster. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

of the lesions. If the lesions are located in the thoracic or hypochondrial region, they are due to Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder channel. Generally speaking, in lesions occurring in the neck and ophthalmic region (which is common in the elderly) in addition to Damp-Heat there is also Wind-Heat. Wind-Heat is also indicated if itching is very intense. If the lesions are pustular, they indicate the presence of Toxic Heat and if they are dark and very painful they indicate Blood stasis, which also is common in the elderly.



TREATMENT NOTE

Herpes zoster can be treated with acupuncture with a three-pronged approach:

1. Expel Wind-Heat or Damp-Heat (or both). For Wind-Heat: T.B.-6 Zhigou and G.B.-31 Fengshi. For Damp-Heat: G.B.-34 Yanglingquan.
2. Insert four needles subcutaneously around the main lesion with the tips towards the centre of the lesion.
3. Needle three Hua Tuo Jia Ji points level with the dermatome affected by the main lesions.

CHINESE PATHOLOGY OF HERPES SIMPLEX

- Damp-Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder: lesions on the trunk
- Damp-Heat with Wind-Heat: lesions on the neck and around the eyes, itchy
- Toxic Heat: papules or pustules
- Blood stasis: dark and painful papules (in addition to Toxic Heat)



Figure 21.54. Wart on hand. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)



Figure 21.55. Plane viral warts. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

k) Warts

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

Warts are common and benign cutaneous tumours due to infection of epidermal cells by the human papilloma virus (HPV) (Figs. 21.54–21.56). The virus infects by direct inoculation and is caught by touch, sexual contact, or in swimming pools.

Common warts present as dome-shaped papules or nodules, usually on the hands or feet.

Plane warts are smooth, flat-topped papules often slightly brown in colour, commonest on the face and hands.

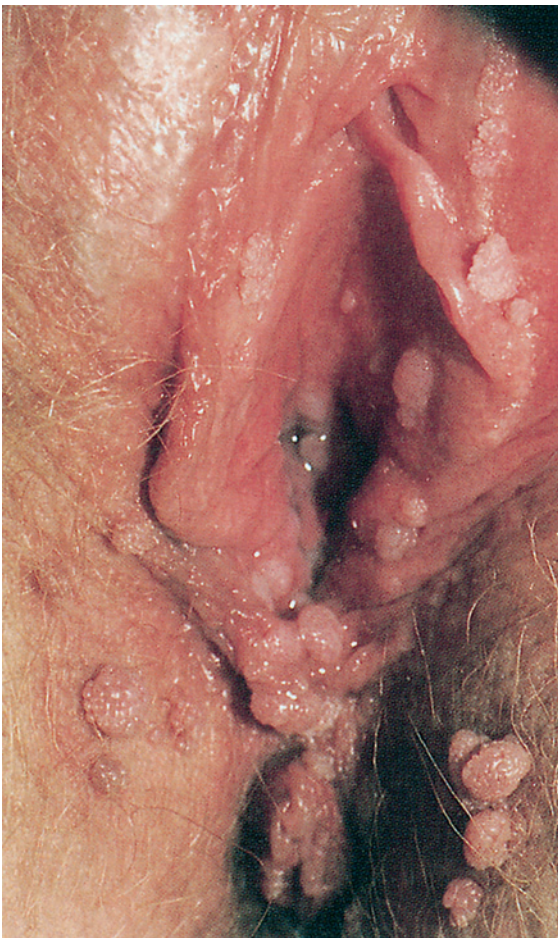


Figure 21.56. Genital warts. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

Plantar warts are seen in children and adolescents on the soles of the feet.

Genital warts affect the penis in males and the vulva and vagina in women. The warts present as small papules.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

From the Chinese point of view, common, plane, and plantar warts are usually due to a combination of Blood deficiency and dryness, Blood-Heat and Blood stasis, depending on whether the warts are pale and dry, red, or dark brown. Genital warts are usually due to Damp-Heat in the Liver channel, which may be



Figure 21.57. Rosacea. (Reproduced with permission from Gawkrödger D: *An illustrated colour text of dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1992, Edinburgh.)

complicated by Toxic Heat if the warts are pustular and painful.

CHINESE PATHOLOGY OF WARTS

- Blood deficient and dry: pale and dry warts
- Blood Heat: red warts
- Blood stasis: dark warts
- Damp-Heat in Liver channel: genital warts
- Toxic Heat: painful pustular warts

I) Rosacea

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#)

i) Western pathology and diagnosis

Rosacea is a chronic, inflammatory, facial dermatosis characterized by erythema and pustules (Figs. 21.57 and 21.58). The earliest symptom of rosacea is usually flushing of the cheeks, which is followed by erythema, telangiectasia (dilated dermal blood vessel), papules, and pustules. Rosacea lacks the comedones of acne and occurs in an older age group.

ii) Chinese pathology and diagnosis

From the Chinese point of view, rosacea may be due to the following patterns:

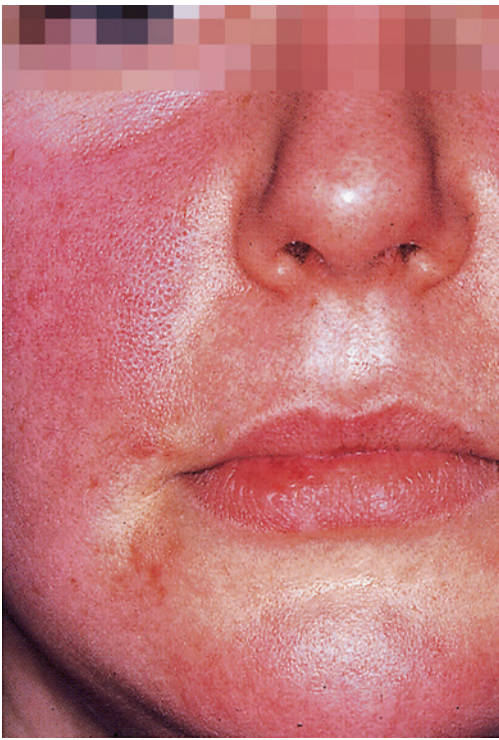


Figure 21.58. Rosacea. (Reproduced with permission from Wilkinson JD, Shaw S: *Dermatology*, Churchill Livingstone, 1998, Edinburgh.)

- Heat in the Lungs and Stomach: characterized by a red, papular rash on the cheeks.
- Toxic Heat: characterized by a red, pustular rash on the cheeks with swelling of the nose.
- Blood Heat: characterized by a red, papular rash on the cheeks often aggravated before or during the menstrual cycle.
- Blood stasis: characterized by a dark-red or reddish-purple papular or pustular rash on the cheeks and nose.

CHINESE PATHOLOGY OF ROSACEA

- Lung- and Stomach-Heat: red, papular rash on the cheeks
- Toxic Heat: red, pustular rash on the cheeks with swelling of the nose
- Blood Heat: red, papular rash on the cheeks aggravated during menstruation in women
- Blood stasis: dark-red or reddish-purple papular or pustular rash on the cheeks and nose



CHAPTER 21 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The ways the Yin organs, Stomach, and Luo channels influence the skin and its different layers.
- The relevance of skin colour, texture, moisture, lesions, rashes, swelling, cracks, and ulcers.
- The pathology and diagnosis of skin diseases from a Western and a Chinese medical perspective.

END NOTES

- Cou Li* (腠里) is a difficult term to translate and one that is interpreted differently by modern Chinese doctors. *Cou* indicates 'spaces' or 'interstices'; it refers to all the spaces in the body, especially the small spaces (as opposed to large cavities, such as the chest and abdomen) all over the body, including the space between the skin and the muscles, which is probably the most clinically relevant. *Li* means 'texture', 'grain' (as in the grain of wood), or 'pattern', and it indicates the texture of the skin and the Internal Organs; it refers to the organized way in which the skin and organs are arranged, forming a 'texture' or 'pattern'. The 'Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet' says: '*Cou is the place of the Triple Burner where the Original True [Essence] converges and Qi and Blood concentrate; Li is the texture of the skin and Internal Organs*' (He Ren 1981 A New Explanation of the Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet [Jin Gui Yao Lue Xin Jie 金匱要略新解], Zhejiang Science Publishing House, p. 2). I translate *Cou Li* as 'space between skin and muscles'. Although this is not strictly accurate, because there are other spaces and because it ignores the *Li* part of the term, it is the most clinically relevant. In the context of skin, therefore, *Cou Li* is the space between the skin and the muscles.
- Clavey gives a different interpretation of the words *bie shi* (别使), which are usually translated as 'emissary' or 'special emissary'. According to him, the words should be translated as 'makes separate'. In other words, if this interpretation is correct, the Triple Burner separates the undifferentiated Original Qi and directs it into different channels and organs to perform its various functions. I personally feel that this interpretation is probably more correct. (Clavey, S. *Fluid physiology and pathology in traditional Chinese medicine*, Churchill Livingstone, 1995, Edinburgh, p. 21.)
- The term *Cou Li* actually indicates more complex structures of the body: it includes all 'spaces' between organs and between channels. Functionally, the *Cou Li* is connected to the Triple Burner. In this context, I will again translate it as 'space between skin and muscles', but the reader should bear in mind that this is only one of the *Cou Li* 'spaces'. Furthermore, although *Cou* means 'spaces' or 'interstices', *Li* means 'pattern' or 'texture', and it refers to the striae of the internal organs. I therefore translate *Cou Li* as 'space between skin and muscles' in the appropriate context, even though this is only one of the meanings of *Cou Li* (see also [a] above).

REFERENCES

- Cou Li* (腠里) is a difficult term to translate and one that is interpreted differently by modern Chinese doctors. *Cou* indicates "spaces" or "interstices" and it refers to all the spaces in the body, especially the small spaces (as opposed to large cavities such as the chest and abdomen) all over the body, including the space between skin and muscles which is probably the most clinically relevant. *Li* means "texture", "grain" (as in the grain of wood), or "pattern", and it indicates the texture of skin and the Internal Organs; it refers to the organized way in which the skin and organs are arranged, forming a

“texture” or “pattern”. The “Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet” says: “*Cou* is the place of the Triple Burner where the Original True [Essence] converges and Qi and Blood concentrate; *Li* is the texture of the skin and Internal Organs” (He Ren 1981 A New Explanation of the Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet *Jin Gui Yao Lue Xin Jie* 金匱要略新解), Zhejiang Science Publishing House, p. 2). I translate *Cou Li* as “space between skin and muscles”. Although this is not strictly accurate, because there are other spaces

and because it ignores the *Li* part of it, it is the most clinically relevant. In the context of skin, therefore, *Cou Li* is the space between skin and muscles.

2. 黄帝内经素问
3. 灵枢经
4. 别使
5. 难经校释

Observation of Children

22

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Complexion

Red complexion

Yellow complexion

Pale complexion

Bluish-greenish complexion

Orifices

Eyes

Ears

Nose

Mouth

Urethra and anus

Body movement

Spinal muscles

Veins on the index finger

Depth of colour

Intensity of colour

Actual colour

Movement of veins

Concentration of colour

Length of veins

Thickness

Creases on the index finger

Root of the nose

Observation in children follows broadly the same rules as that in adults. However, there are some items of observation that apply only to children. These are, in particular:

1. Complexion
2. Orifices
3. Body movement
4. Spinal muscles
5. Veins on the index finger
6. Creases on the index finger
7. Root of the nose

1. COMPLEXION

The characteristics of the normal complexion in children are the same as in adults – the complexion should be rosy and have proper depth, lustre, and moisture.

a) Red complexion

Children are prone to Heat conditions, and a red complexion is fairly common. It always indicates Heat and may pertain to the Lungs, Stomach, Heart, or Liver. In Lung-Heat the cheeks, in particular the right cheek, are red. Stomach-Heat is common in children, and this may cause a redness on both cheeks, especially in the lower part.

b) Yellow complexion

A yellow complexion always indicates a Stomach and Spleen disharmony, which may be a Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency (in which case the complexion would be dull-yellow) or Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen (in which case the complexion would be bright-yellow). A yellowish complexion in children may also indicate Retention of Food.

c) Pale complexion

A pale complexion in children generally indicates Qi or Yang deficiency, usually of the Spleen and/or Lungs.

d) Bluish-greenish complexion

A bluish complexion indicates Cold or shock, whereas a greenish complexion indicates Wind or Pain. A greenish colour around the mouth usually indicates Liver-Wind (in children normally after a febrile disease), abdominal pain from Cold, or Liver-Qi invading the Spleen. A bluish colour on the forehead pertains to the Heart and indicates shock, whereas a bluish colour both on the forehead and on the chin in a baby may indicate pre-natal shock.

2. ORIFICES

The orifices observed in children are the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, urethra, and anus.

a) Eyes

A redness of the sclera indicates either external Wind-Heat or internal Heat. A yellowish colour of the sclera indicates Dampness, whereas a bluish-greenish colour of the sclera indicates Liver-Wind.

Streaming red eyes may indicate measles. Red and cracked corners of the eyes indicate Damp-Heat in the Intestines and retention of Food.

‘White membrane on the pupil in children’ is called *gan yi* in Chinese, which means Childhood Nutritional Impairment Nebula; it consists of a white membrane covering the pupil, often starting with the symptom of decreased vision at night. As its name implies, it occurs in children suffering from nutritional impairment. A nebula is a translucent, greyish corneal haze, scarring, or opacity. For a more detailed discussion of this sign, see Part 5, Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#).

EYES

- Red eyes: Wind-Heat or internal Heat
- Yellowish eyes: Dampness
- Bluish-greenish eyes: Liver-Wind
- Streaming, red eyes: measles
- Red and cracked corners of the eyes: Damp-Heat in the Intestines
- White membrane on the pupil: Childhood Nutritional Impairment

b) Ears

Small and contracted ears indicate poor hereditary Kidney constitution. Redness at the back of the ears indicates Wind-Heat; if the body is also hot and the face red, it may indicate chickenpox. If the helix of the ear is bluish-greenish, it indicates either abdominal pain from Cold or Liver-Wind after a febrile disease.

c) Nose

A runny nose with a white-watery discharge in acute cases indicates an invasion of Wind-Cold. If the discharge is yellowish, it indicates Wind-Heat. A white-watery nasal discharge in a chronic condition indicates allergic rhinitis and is due to Lung-Qi deficiency.

A blocked nose with difficulty breathing generally indicates Dampness or Damp-Heat in the nose; this is very common in children, and it is usually a residual pathogenic factor after repeated external invasions

(especially when treated with antibiotics). A flapping of the nostrils in a child with fever indicates Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs, and it is a relatively serious sign. Sweating on the nose in chronic conditions indicates Lung-Qi deficiency.

d) Mouth

Observation of the mouth includes observation of the lips, gums, and throat.

The lips pertain to the Spleen; pale lips indicate Spleen-Qi deficiency, whereas red lips indicate Heat in the Spleen and Heart. If the lips are dark and dry, it indicates a severe injury of Yin after a febrile disease.

Swollen and red gums indicate Stomach-Heat, retention of Food, or worms.

The throat should always be observed in children; in acute cases, a redness of the throat indicates Wind-Heat, whereas in chronic cases, a redness of the throat is often due to Heat in the Stomach and Intestines.

Erosion, redness, and swelling of the pharynx indicate Toxic Heat. This is seen more frequently in children suffering from acute upper respiratory infections.

Swollen tonsils of a normal colour indicate retention of Dampness or Phlegm occurring against a background of Qi deficiency. This is seen frequently in children with retention of a residual pathogenic factor (e.g. Dampness or Phlegm) after repeated acute upper respiratory infections.

A chronic swelling of the tonsils in children is often accompanied by a chronic swelling of the adenoids, itself also a sign of retention of residual Dampness or Phlegm.

Red and swollen tonsils indicate Heat or Toxic Heat, often in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine channel. The tonsils should always be inspected in acute invasions of Wind-Heat, particularly in children. Red and swollen tonsils are frequently seen in children during acute upper respiratory infections.

During acute invasions of Wind-Heat, a swelling and redness of the tonsils indicates a more severe degree of Wind-Heat and often the presence of Toxic Heat; it also points to an involvement of the Stomach and/or Large Intestine channel. In addition, it tells us that the child probably has a pre-existing condition of Heat, often Stomach-Heat.

A chronic redness and swelling of the tonsils that comes and goes indicates either chronic Heat in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine channel (more common in children and often due to a residual pathogenic factor),

or Empty Heat in the Lung channel. In Chinese medicine, a chronic redness and swelling of the tonsils was called 'milky moth' (*ru*): the tonsils look like a moth's wings and have a milky fluid on them.

Red and swollen tonsils with exudate indicate Toxic Heat in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine channel; they are usually seen during acute upper respiratory infections and are more common in children. Their presence definitely indicates an invasion of Wind-Heat (as opposed to Wind-Cold), and it indicates that it is complicated by Toxic Heat.

A swelling of the tonsils from Toxic Heat was called 'stone moth' (*shi e*): the two tonsils look like a moth's wings and have a stony hardness.

In any of the above pathologies of the tonsils, if both tonsils are affected, it generally indicates a greater severity than if only one is affected.

MOUTH, LIPS, GUMS, THROAT AND TONSILS

- Pale lips: Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Red lips: Spleen- and Heart-Heat
- Dark and dry lips: severe injury of Yin
- Swollen red gums: Stomach-Heat, Retention of Food or worms
- Red throat: Wind-Heat or Heat in Stomach and Intestines
- Erosion, redness, and swelling of the pharynx: Toxic Heat
- Swollen tonsils: Dampness or Phlegm (background of Qi deficiency)
- Red and swollen tonsils: Heat or Toxic Heat in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine
- Red, swollen, and purulent tonsils: Toxic Heat
- Chronic redness and swelling of the tonsils, on and off: Heat in the Stomach and/or Large Intestine or Empty Heat in the Lungs

e) Urethra and anus

A yellowish and wet skin in the genital area indicates Damp-Heat. A persistent nappy (diaper) rash indicates Damp-Heat in the Liver channel. A sore and irritated anus may indicate worms, and itching in the anus at night may indicate pinworms.

3. BODY MOVEMENT

In general, the rules governing observation of children's body movements are the same as in adults. I will therefore highlight only the aspects that are peculiar to children.

The most important difference between adults and children is that it is normal for children to be much more active and to move around during a consultation.

Apart from this, the same principles apply – that is, if the child is listless and excessively quiet, it indicates a Deficiency condition, whereas if the child moves around excessively and is hyperactive, it indicates a Full condition. Full conditions that may cause excessive movement in children are Heat in the Stomach and Intestines, Heart-Fire, or Liver-Fire.

When observing a child's body movements, allowance should be made for any natural shyness of a child in the presence of a doctor; for example, a child may be shy and extremely quiet during the consultation but a 'terror' at home!

4. SPINAL MUSCLES

Observation of the spinal muscles is carried out principally in babies. If the spinal muscles are very soft and flabby, it indicates a constitutional Spleen deficiency.

5. VEINS ON THE INDEX FINGER

In children under age 3 observation of the index finger is used for diagnosis of acute diseases. The three creases of the index finger are called Wind Gate, Qi Gate, and Life Gate, starting from the proximal crease (Fig. 22.1). The left index finger is observed in boys and the right index finger in girls. Observation is carried out by rubbing the finger first and observing any veins appearing on the side of the finger.

Observation of the veins on the index finger in acute diseases in children under age 3 is carried out first of all to assess the seriousness of the condition. If any veins appearing on the finger extend just beyond the Wind Gate, it indicates that the pathogenic factor is in the Connecting channels only; it is relatively light and superficial; and the condition is benign. If any veins appearing on the index finger extend just beyond the Qi Gate, the pathogenic factor is in the main channels; it is deeper; and the condition is more serious. If any veins on the finger extend just beyond the Life Gate, the

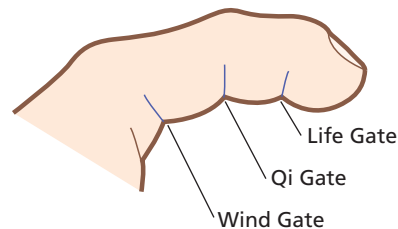


Figure 22.1. Index finger veins diagnosis.

pathogenic factor is in the internal organs; it is deep; and the condition is life-threatening.

The veins appearing on the index finger in young children should be differentiated according to the following criteria:

- Depth of colour
- Intensity of colour
- Actual colour
- Movement of veins
- Concentration of colour
- Length of veins
- Thickness

a) Depth of colour

'Depth' of colour refers not to the shade but to the visibility of the veins on the finger. If the veins are superficial and clearly visible on the surface, this indicates that the disease is on the Exterior and is of external origin; if the veins are deep and hidden, it indicates either that the disease is in the Interior and is of internal origin or that an external pathogenic factor has become internal.

b) Intensity of colour

'Intensity' of colour refers to its 'thickness': if it is thin, the disease is benign; if it is 'thick', the disease is more severe. If the veins disappear easily on massaging the finger, it indicates a Deficiency condition; if they do not disappear easily on massaging and look 'hidden', it indicates an Excess condition.

c) Actual colour

The actual colour of the veins should be observed. Fresh-red veins indicate an external invasion of Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat; reddish-purple veins, internal Heat; bluish-purple veins, Wind-Heat; bluish veins, a Liver condition, often with convulsions; light-red veins, Empty Cold; white veins, Childhood Nutritional Impairment; yellow veins, a Spleen condition; and dark-purple veins, obstruction of the Blood Connecting Vessels.

d) Movement of veins

The 'movement' of the veins refers to a vein that is relatively thick and pulsates strongly but not smoothly and looks congested. This may indicate a Full condition with strong pathogenic factors, a stagnation of Qi and Blood, stagnation of Damp-Phlegm or retention of Food.

e) Concentration of colour

Concentration of colour refers to the density of the colour of the veins – a concentrated colour is 'tightly packed', whereas a less concentrated one is more sparse.

The more concentrated the colour, the more severe the disease. The degree of concentration also indicates the character of the pattern; that is, a more concentrated colour indicates a Full condition and a sparse one an Empty condition.

f) Length of veins

The length of the veins should be observed: long veins indicate that the disease is progressing and short veins that the disease is retreating.

g) Thickness

The thickness of the veins should also be observed: thick veins indicate Heat and Full conditions, whereas thin veins indicate Cold and Empty conditions.

VEINS ON THE INDEX FINGER

Depth

- Superficial: Exterior disease
- Deep: Interior disease

Intensity

- Thin: benign disease
- Thick: severe disease

Colour

- Fresh-red: external Wind
- Reddish-purple: internal Heat
- Bluish-purple: Wind-Heat
- Bluish: Liver-Wind
- Light-red: Empty-Cold
- White: Childhood Nutritional Impairment
- Yellow: Spleen deficiency
- Dark-purple: Blood stasis

Movement

- Thick vein pulsating strongly: Full condition, strong pathogenic factors

Length

- Long: disease progressing
- Short: disease retreating

Thickness

- Thick: Heat, Full conditions
- Thin: Cold, Empty conditions

6. CREASES ON THE INDEX FINGER

The palmar surface of the index finger should be observed for creases. A round crease with a 'tail', (Fig. 22.2), called 'long pearl' in traditional Chinese medicine, indicates Accumulation Disorder. A round crease without a tail, called 'flowing pearl', indicates internal Heat (Fig. 22.3).

A long crease that looks like a snake with its head on the distal end of the palmar surface of the index finger, called 'snake going away', (Fig. 22.4) indicates a digestive problem characterized by vomiting and diarrhoea. A long crease that looks like a snake with its head on the proximal end of the palmar surface of the index finger, called 'snake returning', indicates Accumulation Disorder (Fig. 22.5).

A crease that looks like a bow facing away from the middle finger, called 'bow facing inside', (Fig. 22.6) indicates an external invasion of Wind. A crease looking like a bow facing towards the middle finger, called 'bow facing outside', indicates Phlegm-Heat (Fig. 22.7).

A diagonal crease extending from the radial to the ulnar side with the upper part on the ulnar side indicates an external invasion of Wind-Cold (Fig. 22.8). A diagonal crease extending from the ulnar to the radial side with its upper part on the radial side indicates an external invasion of Cold (Fig. 22.9).

A straight crease that looks like a needle (Fig. 22.10) or, if longer, like a spear (Fig. 22.11) indicates Phlegm-Heat. A long, vertical crease extending through the whole index finger indicates an excess pattern of the

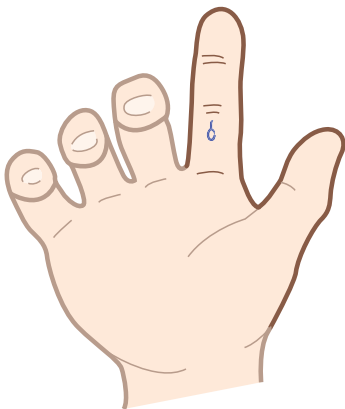


Figure 22.2. 'Long pearl' crease.

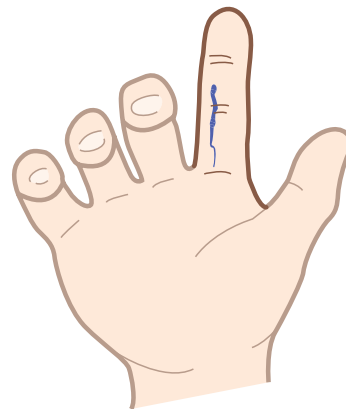


Figure 22.4. 'Snake going away' crease.

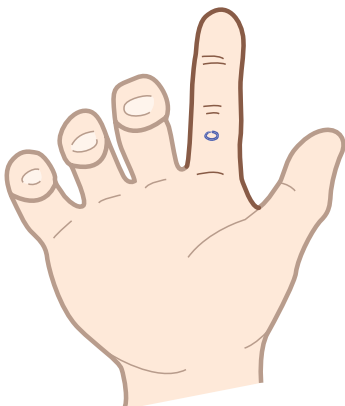


Figure 22.3. 'Flowing pearl' crease.

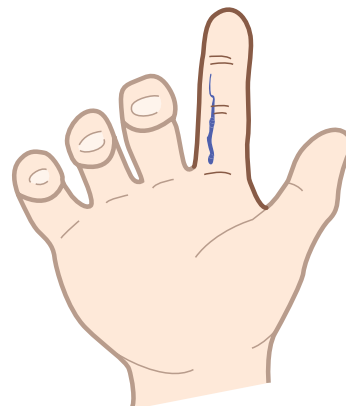


Figure 22.5. 'Snake returning' crease.

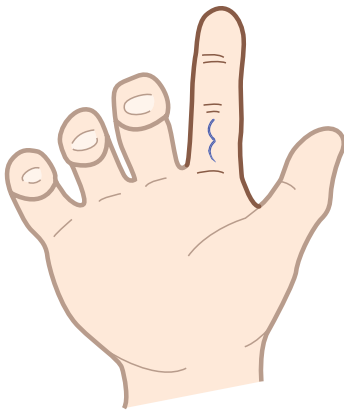


Figure 22.6. 'Bow facing inside' crease.

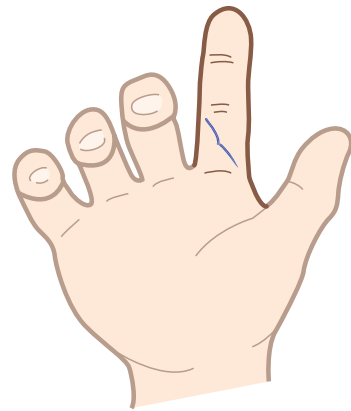


Figure 22.9. Diagonal crease extending from the ulnar to the radial side.

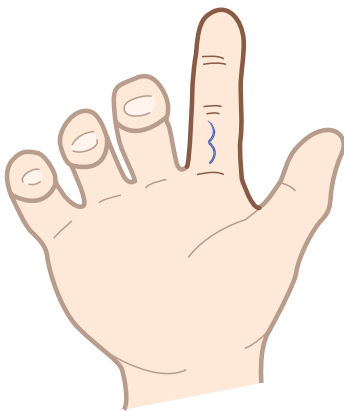


Figure 22.7. 'Bow facing outside' crease.

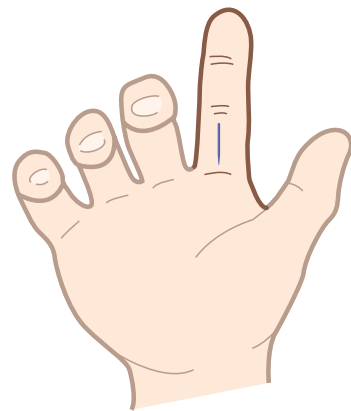


Figure 22.10. 'Needle' crease.

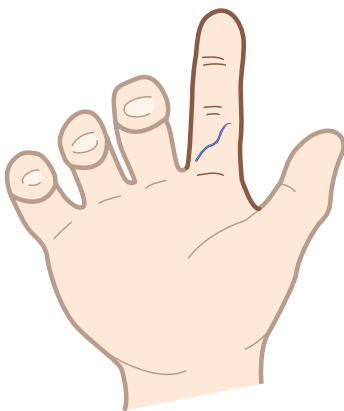


Figure 22.8. Diagonal crease extending from the radial to the ulnar side.

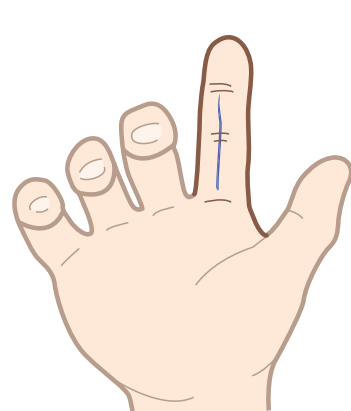


Figure 22.11. 'Spear' crease.

Liver (often involving Liver-Wind) with severe Spleen deficiency (Fig. 22.12).

A curved crease indicates Liver-Wind (Fig. 22.13). A crease with its end shaped like a hook indicates deficiency of Yang of the Stomach and Spleen with internal Cold (Fig. 22.14). A curved crease with three bends that looks like a worm indicates Accumulation Disorder (Fig. 22.15). Three creases that resemble the Chinese character for 'Water' (somewhat like two letters 'k' back to back) indicate chronic cough (Fig. 22.16). A curved crease that looks like an 's' indicates chronic vomiting and diarrhoea and Childhood Nutritional Impairment (Fig. 22.17).

A long crease that looks like a fish-bone indicates Liver-Wind and convulsions (Fig. 22.18). A crease branching out into two small branches at its upper end

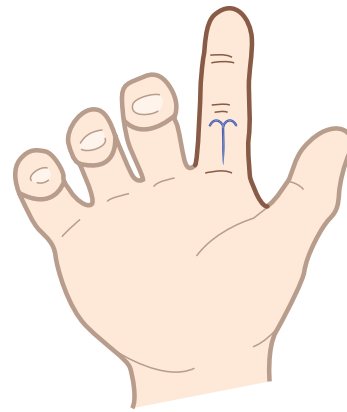


Figure 22.14. Crease with end shaped like a hook.

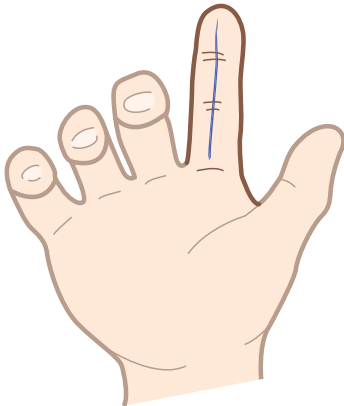


Figure 22.12. Long, vertical crease.

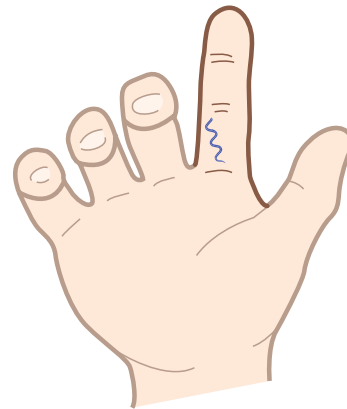


Figure 22.15. 'Worm' crease.

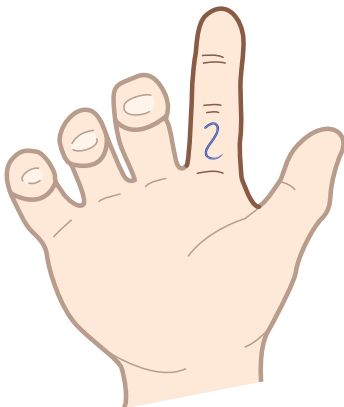


Figure 22.13. Curved crease.



Figure 22.16. Three creases.



Figure 22.17. S-shaped crease.

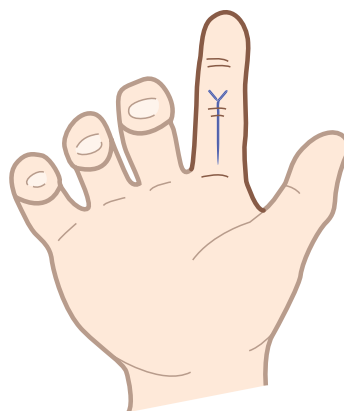


Figure 22.19. Branching out crease.

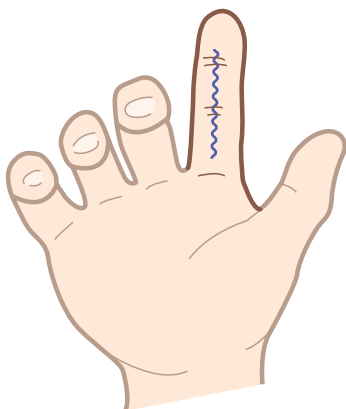


Figure 22.18. 'Fish-bone' crease.

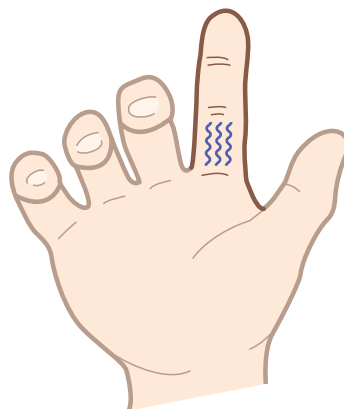


Figure 22.20. Three irregular creases.

also indicates Liver-Wind and convulsions (Fig. 22.19). Three squiggly creases indicate intestinal worms (Fig. 22.20).

7. ROOT OF THE NOSE

The root of the nose (the part of the nose between the eyes) can be used diagnostically in children under age 4. It reflects specifically the condition of the Stomach and Spleen (Fig. 22.21).

If the root of the nose is dark-greenish, it indicates retention of Food or, in infants, problems with feeding and generally a Full condition.

If the root of the nose is light-greenish, it indicates digestive problems of an Empty nature. If there are bluish blood vessels on the root of the nose, it indicates abdominal pain due to retention of Food or Cold.

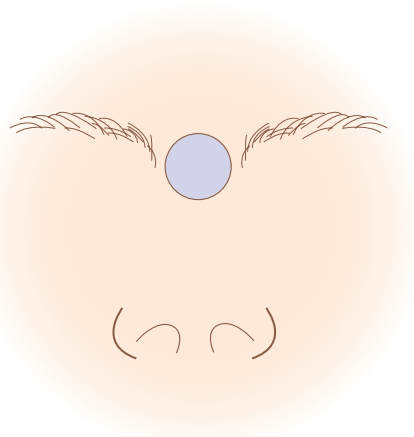


Figure 22.21. The root of the nose area.

Greenish maculae on the root of the nose indicate chronic diarrhoea from retention of Food.

ROOT OF THE NOSE

- Dark-greenish: Retention of Food
- Light-greenish: Empty condition
- Bluish vessels: abdominal pain
- Greenish macules: chronic diarrhoea

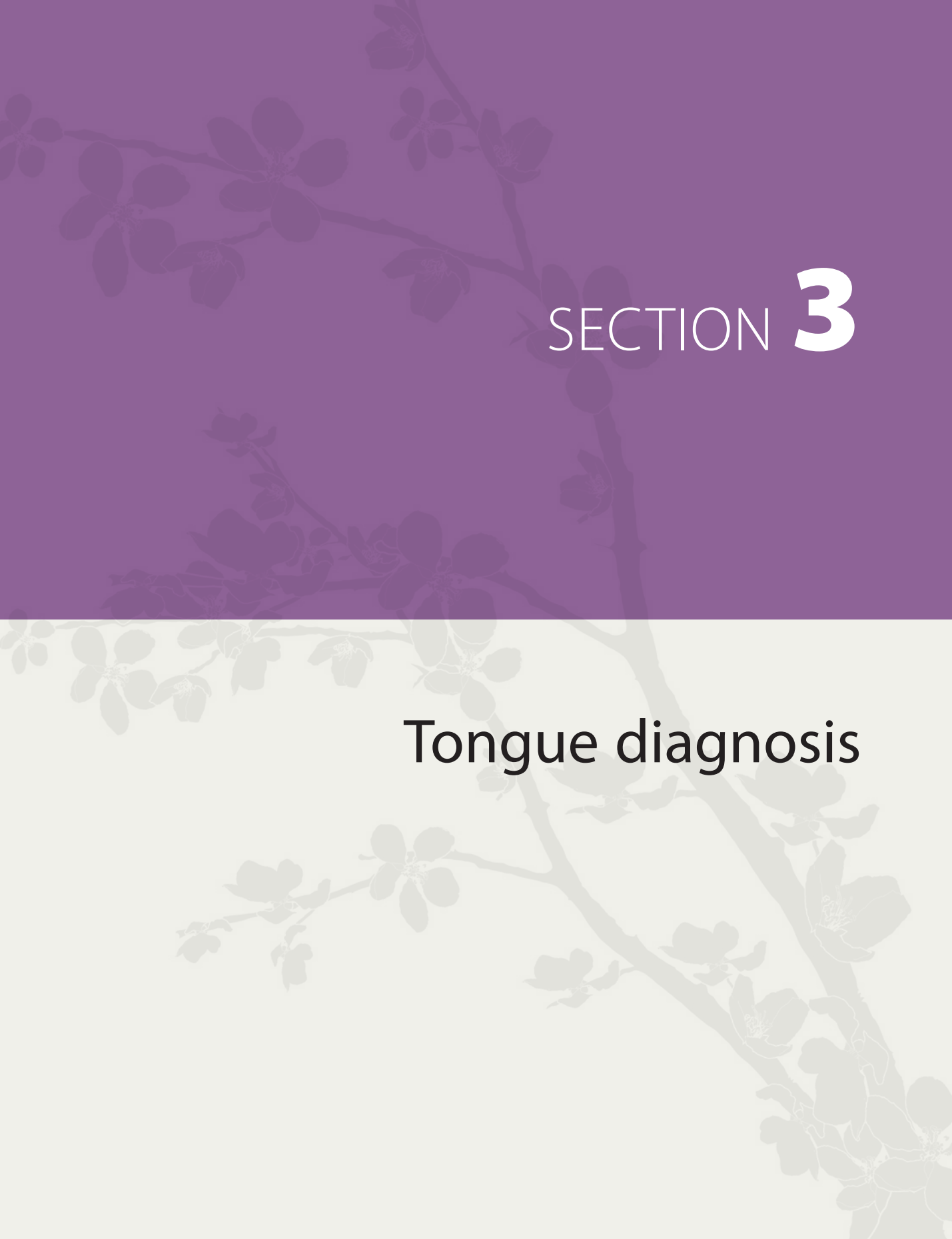


CHAPTER 22 LEARNING OUTCOME

The student now should understand:

- The observations that apply only to children – complexion, orifices, body movement, spinal muscles, index finger veins and creases, and the root of the nose.

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SECTION 3

Tongue diagnosis

INTRODUCTION

Tongue diagnosis is a very important part of diagnosis by observation. The strength of tongue diagnosis lies in its clarity and objectivity. Especially when compared to pulse diagnosis, tongue diagnosis is quite objective – when a tongue is too red or too pale, this can be observed objectively.

Another important strength of tongue diagnosis is its capacity to shed light on complicated conditions. For example, a simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang is quite common in women over age 40, especially menopausal women. This simultaneous deficiency can give rise to confusing hot and cold manifestations; the tongue will indicate quite clearly whether there is a predominance of Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

The principal aspects of tongue diagnosis are the tongue-body colour, the tongue-body shape, and the coating. The tongue reflects the state of the internal organs and that of Qi and Blood. From the 8-Principle points of view, it clearly reflects Heat-Cold, Full-Empty, and Yin-Yang conditions.

The discussion of tongue diagnosis proceeds in the following parts:

Chapter 23

1. Conditions for examining the tongue
 - a) Lighting
 - b) Techniques of observation of the tongue
 - c) External factors affecting the colour of the tongue

2. Areas of the tongue
3. Clinical significance of the tongue
 - a) Tongue-body colour
 - b) Tongue-body shape
 - c) Tongue-coating
 - d) Tongue-spirit

Chapter 24

Tongue-body colour and sublingual veins

Chapter 25

Tongue-body shape

Chapter 26

Tongue coating

Chapter 27

Tongue images and patterns

- Qi-deficiency tongues
- Yang-deficiency tongues
- Blood-deficiency tongues
- Yin-deficiency tongues
- The tongue in Phlegm and Dampness
- The tongue in Heat
- The tongue in Cold
- The tongue in Qi and Blood stagnation
- The tongue in internal Wind
- The tongue in external invasions of Wind

For a more detailed discussion of tongue diagnosis, see 'Tongue Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine', by G. Maciocia, Eastland Press, 1995, Seattle.

Tongue Diagnosis

23

CHAPTER CONTENTS

General principles

Conditions for examining the tongue

Lighting

Techniques of observation of the tongue

External factors affecting the colour of the tongue

Areas of the tongue

Clinical significance of the tongue

Tongue-body colour

Tongue-body shape

Tongue coating

Tongue spirit

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The discussion of tongue diagnosis in this chapter will be articulated in the following parts:

1. Conditions for examining the tongue
 - a) Lighting
 - b) Techniques of observation of the tongue
 - c) External factors affecting the colour of the tongue
2. Areas of the tongue
3. Clinical significance of the tongue
 - a) Tongue-body colour
 - b) Tongue-body shape
 - c) Tongue coating
 - d) Tongue spirit

For a detailed discussion of tongue diagnosis, see 'Tongue Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine'.¹

1. CONDITIONS FOR EXAMINING THE TONGUE

a) Lighting

Proper lighting is absolutely essential for a correct examination of the tongue and the only good lighting is natural light on a sunny day. The room where the

patient is examined should have an abundant source of natural light; for example, no proper natural light can ever be achieved in a basement. Even in daylight, the colour of the tongue can only be interpreted properly indoors if the day is sunny; on a cloudy day the colour of the tongue cannot be accurately observed indoors; if the patient is examined on such a day, it is advisable when observing the tongue to ask the patient to stand next to a window or even outdoors.

Obviously, it is seldom possible to achieve ideal conditions; if it is necessary to observe the tongue on a cloudy day or in the afternoon or evening, I find that the best artificial light is that of a halogen bulb and the best way to observe the tongue is by means of a table lamp fitted with one of these bulbs that we can hold very near the surface of the tongue.

b) Techniques of observation of the tongue

One should not ask the patient to hold the tongue out for longer than approximately 15 seconds because the longer the tongue is extended, the darker it will tend to become. If we need longer than 15 seconds to observe the tongue, which we normally do, we should ask the patient to withdraw the tongue, close the mouth and extend the tongue again: this can be done several times without affecting its body colour.

It is very important to examine the tongue systematically following always the same order, which should be as follows:

- tongue-body colour
- tongue-body shape
- tongue coating
- tongue spirit

I would strongly recommend following this systematic order of observation of the tongue because it reflects the relative clinical importance of each factor. For example, the tongue-body colour reflects conditions of

Heat or Cold and deficiency of Yin or Yang in various organs, especially the Yin organs; it should therefore be always the first aspect to be observed. The tongue-body shape often simply adds information to that gleaned from observation of the tongue-body colour; for example, if the tongue is Pale from Yang deficiency, its swelling will simply indicate that the Yang deficiency is particularly pronounced. The tongue coating reflects more the condition of the Yang organs, and it is easily influenced by short-term factors; this makes it relatively less important than observation of the tongue-body colour in chronic conditions.

c) External factors affecting the colour of the tongue

The most obvious external factors affecting the colour of the tongue are highly coloured foods, sweets, drinks, or pastilles. If a patient's tongue has a very obvious, unusual, bright colour, always ask what he or she has been eating.

Spicy foods, such as cayenne pepper and curry, may tend to make the tongue slightly redder soon after consumption. Tobacco smoking usually colours the coating yellow, and in regular smokers, this is permanent. However, this cannot be written off as no more than a false appearance due to an external factor; in fact, tobacco, which has a hot energy, will tend to create Heat.

Medicines

Some medicines affect the appearance of the tongue, most commonly the antibiotics. These drugs tend to make the tongue partially peeled (i.e. the loss of small patches of coating); therefore, when I see such a tongue, the first thing I ask is whether the patient is on antibiotics or has taken them recently (Fig. 23.1). In my experience, the effect of the antibiotics on the tongue lasts for about

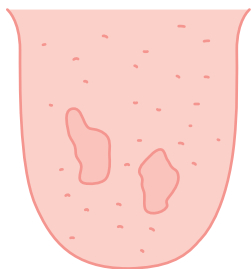


Figure 23.1. Partially peeled tongue from antibiotics.

2 weeks after the course has been stopped. Judging from the effects of antibiotics on the tongue, we can deduce that they injure Stomach-Yin.

Oral corticosteroids tend to make the tongue Red and Swollen, whereas inhaled bronchodilators (e.g. salbutamol) may cause the tip of the tongue to become Red, but only after many years of use.

Anti-inflammatory drugs (e.g. phenylbutazone) paradoxically cause the tongue to develop red points.

Most cytotoxic drugs used for cancer tend to create a very thick, dark-yellow or brown coating and also make the tongue-body Red.

2. AREAS OF THE TONGUE

In men and women alike, the tongue-body can be divided into three areas, the rear corresponding to the Lower Burner, the middle to the Middle Burner, and the front to the Upper Burner (Fig. 23.2).

Therefore, according to this division, the front third of the tongue reflects the state of the Heart and Lungs; the middle third that of the Stomach, Spleen, Liver, and Gall-Bladder; and the rear third that of the Kidneys, Bladder, and Intestines (Fig. 23.3).

The relative position of the Heart and Lung areas on the tongue should be explained in relation to redness, swelling, cracks, or Purple colour.

When there is Lung-Heat (Fig. 23.4), this will make the whole front of the tongue Red *including* the Heart area (even though the Heat is only in the Lungs and not in the Heart). When there is Heart-Heat (Fig. 23.5), only the tip of the tongue becomes Red.

As far as swelling is concerned, a swelling of the tip itself indicates a Heart pathology, usually Heart-Heat.

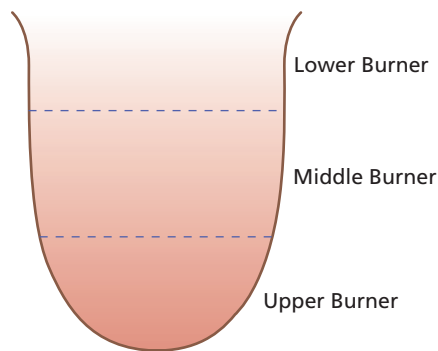


Figure 23.2. Divisions of the tongue according to the Three Burners.

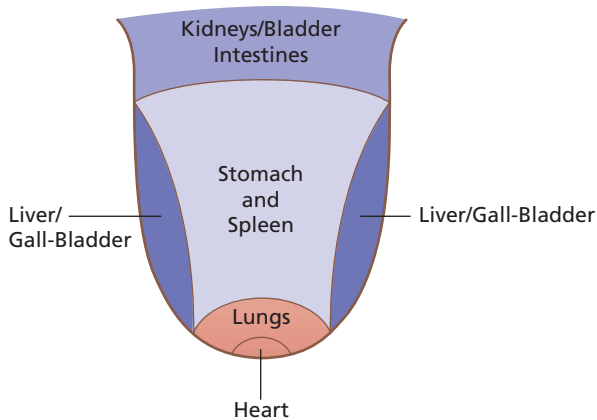


Figure 23.3. Divisions of the tongue according to the internal organs.

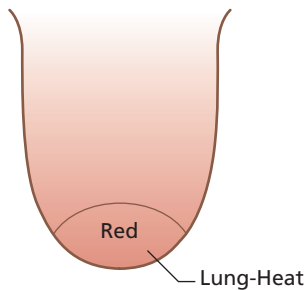


Figure 23.4. Tongue indicating Lung-Heat (Red in the front third).

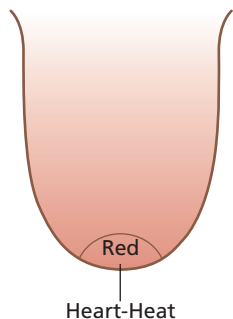


Figure 23.5. Tongue indicating Heart-Heat (Red tip).

A Lung-related swelling usually appears either in the whole front third or on the sides between the Heart area and the Stomach and Spleen area; I call this area the 'chest' area as it reflects pathology of the heart, lungs or, in women, breast (Figs. 23.6, 23.7 and 23.8).

As far as cracks are concerned, Lung cracks are usually located in the area between the tip and the centre (Fig. 23.9).

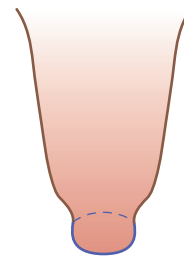


Figure 23.6. Swelling in Heart area.

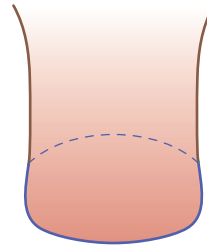


Figure 23.7. Swelling in Lung area (front third).

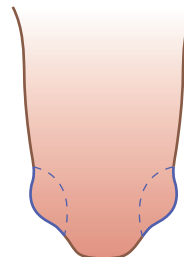


Figure 23.8. Swelling in chest area (sides).

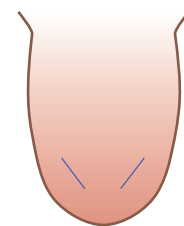


Figure 23.9. Lung cracks.

A Purple colour on the sides of the tongue between the tip and centre may be related to the lungs or heart in a biomedical sense; it indicates Blood stasis. In lung disease it is seen in chronic asthma or emphysema, whereas in heart disease, it is seen in coronary heart disease or angina. The Purple patch may be unilateral or bilateral (Fig. 23.10). In women a Purple colour in that area may also indicate a breast pathology.

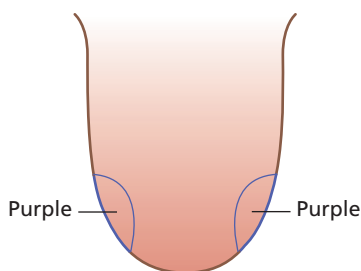


Figure 23.10. Purple colour in chest area (Lungs or Heart, in women also the breast).

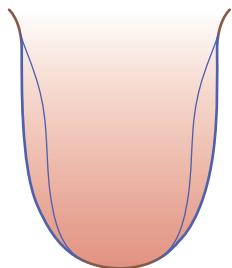


Figure 23.11. The sides in Liver pathology.

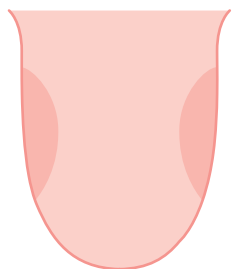


Figure 23.12. The sides in Spleen pathology.

Although the sides of the tongue correspond to Liver and Gall-Bladder, they also, under certain circumstances, may reflect conditions of the Spleen. A pathology of the Liver, such as Heat, is reflected along the whole side of the tongue; a pathology of the Spleen also is reflected on the sides, but only in the central section. This applies to both redness and swelling, and [Figures 23.11](#) and [23.12](#) illustrate this difference.

3. CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TONGUE

The importance of tongue diagnosis lies mostly in the fact that it nearly always shows the true condition of the patient; of course, this is most useful in complicated conditions when there may be contradictory signs of

Heat and Cold or of Yin and Yang deficiency. For example, in menopausal conditions, in which there is often a simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang and contradictory symptoms of Heat and Cold, the tongue clearly shows whether there is a predominance of Yin or Yang deficiency because it will be Red in the former case and Pale in the latter.

The clinical significance of the tongue must be related to its various aspects.

a) Tongue-body colour

The tongue-body colour reflects primarily the state of the Yin organs and Blood; it shows conditions of Heat or Cold and of Yin or Yang deficiency.

The tongue-body's own colour is visible through the tongue coating, and it is important not to confuse the two. Generally speaking, the tongue coating does not extend right to the edge of the tongue, therefore the sides of the tongue can show us the tongue-body's colour if the coating is very thick. Observation of the tongue-body colour includes that of red points which usually, but not always, occur on a Red tongue.

Examination of the body colour should always include an examination of the veins under the tongue.

The normal Stomach fluids tend to make the tongue pale, whereas Heart-Blood tends to redden it. The influences of these two organs, therefore, cause the normal tongue to be pale-red, indicating a good state of Stomach fluids and Heart-Blood.

b) Tongue-body shape

The tongue-body shape reflects primarily conditions of Deficiency or Excess, and observation of it adds more information to that gleaned from the tongue-body colour.

Observation of the tongue-body shape includes consideration of the shape itself, its thickness (Thin, Swollen, etc.), its suppleness (Stiff, Flabby, etc.), its surface (cracks, etc.), and its involuntary movements (Quivering, Moving, etc.).

The normal tongue-body shape is supple, not swollen, not thin, and without cracks.

c) Tongue coating

The tongue coating reflects primarily the state of the Yang organs and especially of the Stomach. It also reflects conditions of Deficiency or Excess and of Heat or Cold.

The tongue coating is formed when some of the fluids generated in the process of the Stomach's digestion of food flow up and create its coating. A thin, white tongue coating, therefore, indicates a good state of Stomach-Qi while a rootless or an absent tongue coating indicates weakening of Stomach-Qi.

The tongue coating should be thin enough for the tongue-body colour to be seen through it.

d) Tongue spirit

The tongue 'spirit' refers to the general appearance of the tongue: this is called *shen* in Chinese, and it is much the same as the *shen* of the complexion and eyes (i.e. referring to the qualities of brightness, sheen, and vitality). One can therefore distinguish two types of tongue: one with spirit, the other without spirit.

A tongue with spirit denotes certain qualities of liveliness, suppleness, vitality, and brightness of the tongue-body. A tongue without spirit looks lifeless, rather

stiff, rather dark, and dull. A tongue without spirit denotes a poor prognosis or that the condition will be more difficult to treat.



CHAPTER 23 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The best light for accurate tongue diagnosis.
- The recommended systematic approach to tongue observation: body colour, body shape, coating, and tongue spirit
- The external factors that may influence tongue colour.
- The different tongue areas and their clinical significance.
- The clinical significance of body colour, shape, coating, and tongue spirit.

END NOTE

1. Maciocia G: *Tongue Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine*, Eastland Press, 1995 Seattle.

24

Tongue-Body Colour

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Tongue spirit

Tongue-body colour

Pale

Red

Purple

Sublingual veins

The discussion of the clinical significance of the tongue-body will be divided into the following parts:

1. Tongue spirit
2. Tongue-body colours
3. Sublingual veins

1. TONGUE SPIRIT

The tongue 'spirit' refers to the general appearance of the tongue: this is called *shen* in Chinese, and it is much the same as the *shen* of the complexion and eyes (i.e. referring to the qualities of brightness, sheen, and vitality). One can therefore distinguish two types of tongue: one with spirit, the other without spirit.

A tongue with spirit denotes certain qualities of liveliness, suppleness, vitality, and brightness of the tongue-body; a tongue without spirit looks lifeless, rather stiff, rather dark, and dull. One can use the analogy of a piece of meat in a butcher's shop: the tongue with spirit looks like a fresh piece of meat, whereas the tongue without spirit looks like an old piece of meat which has become dark, greyish, and lifeless.

The spirit should be observed in particular on the root of the tongue because the root reflects the state of the Kidneys and the spirit of this area reflects the condition of the Kidney-Essence. Kidney-Essence is the foundation of life and the absence of spirit on the root of the tongue indicates a severe deficiency of the Kidneys and therefore the tendency to ill health. The tongue

spirit is basically a prognostic sign because a tongue with spirit indicates that the patient may recover relatively easily, whereas a tongue without spirit indicates that, whatever the patient may suffer from, the treatment may be prolonged.

It is important to remember that the tongue spirit has nothing to do with other pathological signs on the tongue; in other words, the patient may have a tongue that is pathological in many respects (e.g. Red with a thick coating), but if it has a spirit, it indicates that the Kidney-Essence is still strong and that the body can fight off pathogenic factors.

2. TONGUE-BODY COLOUR

The tongue-body colour reflects primarily the state of the Yin organs and Blood, and it shows conditions of Heat or Cold and of Yin or Yang deficiency. The normal body colour is pale-red.

Traditionally five pathological colours are described: Pale, Red, Dark-Red, Purple, and Blue. However, the clinical significance of the Dark-Red tongue is essentially the same as that of the Red tongue, and the clinical significance of the Blue tongue is essentially the same as that of the Bluish-Purple tongue; therefore, the pathological colours may be narrowed down to three – Pale, Red, and Purple.

a) Pale

The Pale tongue is paler than normal. The pallor ranges from a very slight paleness to a paleness so extreme that the tongue is almost white (Fig. 24.1).

The Pale tongue indicates either Yang deficiency or Blood deficiency. In Yang deficiency it will tend to be slightly wet, whereas in Blood deficiency it will tend to be slightly dry. The latter is much more common in women. If it is only slightly Pale, it may also indicate Qi deficiency.



Figure 24.1. Pale tongue.

The tongue is often Pale only on the sides. If the pallor is all along the sides, it indicates Liver-Blood deficiency; if it is only in the central section, Spleen-Blood deficiency. In severe cases of Liver-Blood deficiency, the sides may also become orangey.

The Pale tongue normally has a coating; a Pale tongue without a coating indicates severe Blood deficiency; this is relatively rare and is usually seen only in women.

b) Red

The Red tongue is redder than the normal. Although traditionally two shades are described, Red or Dark-Red, the clinical significance of these two is essentially the same (Fig. 24.2).

A Red tongue always indicates Heat, which may be Full or Empty; therefore, when we observe a Red tongue, the first thing we should ask ourselves is whether it has a coating or not. If the tongue is Red with a coating with root (whatever its colour), it indicates Full Heat; if the tongue is Red without a coating or is coated and partially not, or with a rootless coating (whatever its colour), it indicates Empty Heat.

It should be stressed that a Red tongue without a coating indicates specifically Empty Heat rather than Yin deficiency, although obviously it arises from the latter. In other words, it is the lack of coating that indicates the Yin deficiency and the redness (without coating) that indicates Empty Heat. The implication of this, of course, is that there are many tongue types that indicate Yin deficiency if the tongue-body is not Red.

The tongue-body may be Red in specific areas, especially the tip, the front third, the centre, or the



Figure 24.2. Red tongue.

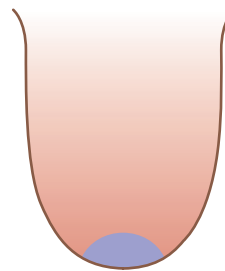


Figure 24.3. Red tip.



- Red tongue with coating: Full Heat
- Red tongue without coating: Empty Heat
- Normal tongue without coating: Yin deficiency

sides. A Red tip of the tongue indicates Heart-Heat (Full or Empty): if the tip only is Red, it indicates that the condition of Heart-Heat is slight, whereas if the whole tongue is Red and the tip redder, it indicates that there is generalized Heat and severe Heart-Heat (Figs. 24.3 and Fig. 24.4).

Red sides all along the edge indicate Liver-Heat (Figs. 24.5 and Fig. 24.6), whereas a redness on the sides only in the central section indicates either Stomach-Heat or Spleen-Heat (Fig. 24.7).

If the tongue is Red in the centre it indicates Stomach-Heat (Fig. 24.8); if it is Red in the front third (including the tip) it indicates Lung-Heat (Fig. 24.9).

i) Red points

Before defining red points, we should define the red 'grains'. Ancient Chinese books on tongue diagnosis

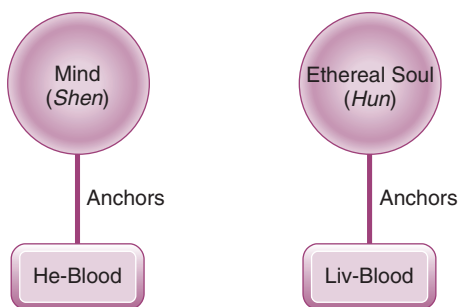


Figure 24.4. Red tip.

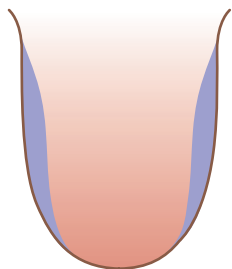


Figure 24.5. Liver Heat.



Figure 24.6. Red sides (Liver areas).

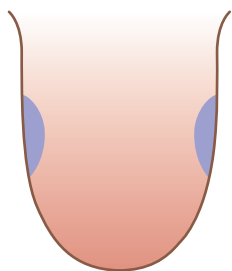


Figure 24.7. Spleen Heat.

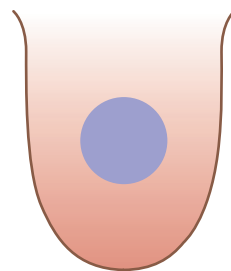


Figure 24.8. Stomach Heat.

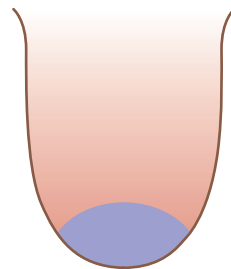


Figure 24.9. Lung Heat.

say that the physiological Minister Fire ascending to communicate with the Heart forms red grains on the surface of the tongue (bearing in mind that the tongue is the offshoot of the Heart).

These red grains are normal and indicate that the physiological Minister Fire is in a healthy state; that is, it is neither excessive nor deficient. When the Minister Fire becomes pathological from various life influences, it flares upwards, causing the red grains to become redder and to protrude from the surface of the tongue so that they become more visible: when this happens they are called red 'points'.

Red points, therefore, are always pathological; they indicate a pathological state of the Minister Fire flaring upwards. Red points always indicate Heat to a degree greater than when the tongue is just Red. The intensity of their colour and their distribution clearly correlate with the intensity of the Heat; the more intense the colour and the more dense the distribution, the stronger the Heat (Fig. 24.10).

Red 'spots' look the same as red points except that they are larger and they are usually seen only on the root of the tongue. Like red points, red spots indicate Heat, but with the additional component of some Blood stasis.

Red points are frequently seen on the tip, sides, centre or root of the tongue. Red points on the tip are relatively



Figure 24.10. Red points.

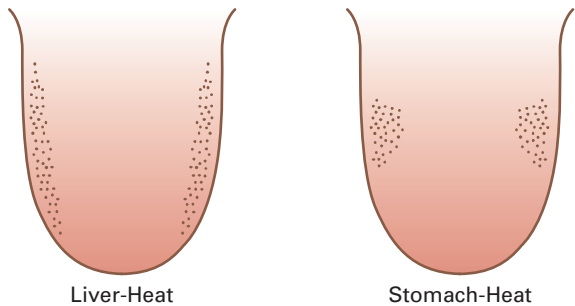


Figure 24.11. Red points indicating Liver-Heat or Stomach-Heat.

common, and they indicate Heart-Fire, usually deriving from emotional stress. Red points on the sides in the Liver area indicate Liver-Fire, whereas red points in the centre indicate Stomach-Heat. However, Stomach-Heat may also be reflected in Red points on the sides, but only in the middle section of the tongue and along a broader strip (Fig. 24.11).

With Lung Heat, red points may appear either in the chest area or in the whole front third of the tongue, as opposed to the very tip as in the case of Heart-Heat (Fig. 24.12).

Red points on the root indicate Heat, usually Damp-Heat, in the Bladder or Intestines.

ii) Red points in external diseases

The significance of red points in external diseases is different from that in internal diseases. First of all, red points in acute external diseases definitely indicate an invasion of Wind-Heat as opposed to Wind-Cold.

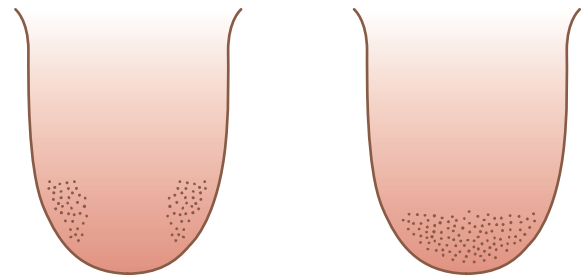


Figure 24.12. Red points indicating Lung-Heat.

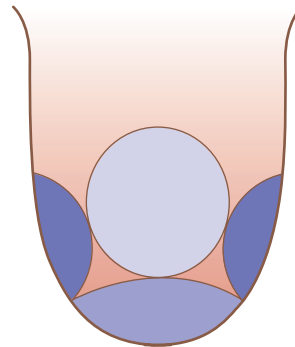


Figure 24.13. Areas corresponding to Interior and Exterior in acute, external diseases.

In external diseases the density of the red points reflects not only the intensity of the pathogenic factor, but also its progression towards the Interior; thus, if in the course of an acute external disease the red points become denser, it indicates not only that the pathogenic factor has become stronger, but that it is beginning to penetrate into the Interior.

The distribution of the red points also reflects the stages of penetration of an external pathogenic factor. In the very beginning stages of an invasion of external Wind, the red points may be more concentrated on the front third or on the sides. In this context, these two areas correspond to the Exterior of the body while the centre of the tongue corresponds to the Interior (Fig. 24.13).

Thus, if after a few days the red points from these two areas extend towards the centre of the tongue, it indicates that a pathogenic factor is penetrating into the Interior.

c) Purple

A Purple tongue always indicates Blood stasis, which itself may derive from Cold or from Heat (Figs. 24.14

and 24.15). Internal Cold contracts and obstructs the circulation of Blood, leading to Blood stasis; Heat leads to Blood stasis by condensing the body fluids and Blood. When Blood stasis derives from Cold, the tongue is Bluish-Purple while when it derives from Heat, it is Reddish-Purple. Therefore the Bluish-Purple tongue indicating Cold derives from a Pale tongue, whereas the Reddish-Purple tongue derives from a Red tongue (Figure 24.16).

A tongue becomes Purple only after a prolonged time, usually years; therefore, it always indicates a chronic condition and for this reason it is far more common in the elderly. The Purple colour of the tongue indicates potentially serious conditions and in the presence of such tongue-body colour, we should always invigorate Blood and eliminate stasis (in addition to expelling internal Cold in the case of Blood stasis deriving from Cold and clearing Heat in the case of Blood stasis deriving from Heat), even in the absence of any symptom of Blood stasis. Serious conditions relating to Blood stasis in Chinese medicine include cancer, coronary heart disease, stroke, and hypertension.

The tongue can be only partially Purple, and the most common areas are the sides (Liver or chest area) of the tongue, the centre, and the front third; the most frequent occurrence is on the sides in the Liver area. Strangely, the tongue is never Purple on the tip only, and Blood stasis in the Heart usually manifests in the chest/breast area instead (see below).

A Purple colour on the sides in the Liver area indicates Blood stasis in the Liver, which may occur in any of the areas influenced by the Liver channel; for example, Liver-Blood stasis in the hypochondrium, epigastrium, lower abdomen, and Uterus (Fig. 24.17). Figure 24.18



Figure 24.14. Reddish-Purple tongue.



Figure 24.15. Bluish-Purple tongue.

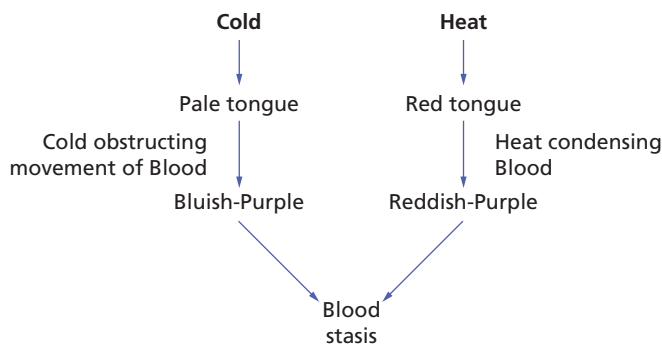


Figure 24.16. Development of Bluish-Purple or Reddish-Purple tongue.



Figure 24.17. Purple colour in Liver areas.

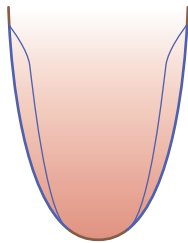


Figure 24.18. Liver area.

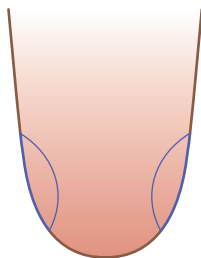


Figure 24.19. Breast/chest areas.

illustrates the Liver area. It is interesting to note that although the Uterus is in the Lower Burner, whose state is reflected in the back third of the tongue, Blood stasis in the Uterus is manifested with a Purple colour not on the root of the tongue but on the sides in the Liver area.

A Purple colour on the sides in the chest area indicates Blood stasis in the chest (which may include heart or lungs in a biomedical sense) or, in women only, the breasts (Figure 24.19). In lung diseases, a Purple



Figure 24.20. Purple colour in breast/chest area.

colour in the chest area is seen in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, such as chronic asthma, bronchitis, or emphysema. In heart diseases, a Purple colour in the chest area is seen in coronary heart disease.

In addition, in women a Purple colour in the chest/breast area may indicate a breast pathology, such as breast lumps, whether benign or malignant. Observation of the breast area in women suffering from carcinoma of the breast is an important prognostic factor because if this area is clearly Purple, the prognosis is poor, whereas if it is not, the prognosis is good. A Purple colour in the breast area is also sometimes seen in women without any breast pathology; this may indicate the predisposition to breast lumps and one should therefore invigorate Blood and eliminate stasis in the breasts even in the absence of symptoms and signs (Fig. 24.20).

A Purple colour in the centre of the tongue indicates Blood stasis in the Stomach, whereas a Purple colour in the front third indicates Blood stasis in the Lungs.



CLINICAL NOTE

In women I always observe carefully the breast area (also called chest area). In the absence of lung or heart disease (in a biomedical sense), the breast area reflects pathology of the breast in women. In particular, a purple colour of the breast area indicates Blood stasis in the breast. This can potentially lead to carcinoma of the breast. However, the emphasis is on the word 'potentially'; we should never assume that a woman has breast cancer purely on the basis of a purple colour in the breast area. Nevertheless, if a woman has a purple colour in the breast area, I would actively invigorate Blood in the breast. (See the following [Treatment Note](#).)



TREATMENT NOTE

To treat Blood stasis in the breasts (or breast) with acupuncture, I use G.B.-21 Jianjing, G.B.-41 Zulinqi and ST-18 Rugen. To treat Blood stasis in the breasts with herbal medicine, I use the prescription Ru He Nei Xiao Tang *Breast Kernel Inner-Dissolving Decoction*:

Chai Hu Radix Bupleuri 6g
Xiang Fu Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi 9g
Chen Pi Pericarpium Citri reticulati 9g
Yu Jin Tuber Curcumae 9g
Dang Gui Radix Angelicae sinensis 6g
Chi Shao Radix Paeoniae rubrae 15g
Shan Ci Gu Pseudobulbus Clematraelae 9g
Xia Ku Cao Spica Prunellae vulgaris 12g
Lou Lu Radix Rhapontici 9g
Si Gua Luo Fasciculus Luffae vascularis 5g
Gan Cao Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis 3g

PURPLE AREAS ON THE TONGUE

- Liver areas: Liver-Blood stasis or Blood stasis in the Uterus
- Breast/chest areas: Blood stasis in the heart or breast
- Centre: Blood stasis in the Stomach

3. SUBLINGUAL VEINS

The sublingual veins should always form part of a routine examination of the tongue-body. Under normal conditions, the two veins under the tongue are barely visible, and they have a very faint, pale-red colour. When they become clearly visible, they are by definition pathological (Fig. 24.21). One should observe the size and the colour of the sublingual veins.

If the veins are distended but not dark, it indicates Qi deficiency, whereas if they are too thin in relation to



Figure 24.21. Sublingual veins.

the sides of the tongue and the patient's body itself, it indicates Yin deficiency.

The most important sign with regard to sublingual veins is their Purple colour. If they are distended and dark Purple, it indicates Blood stasis, usually in the Upper Burner (Lungs or Heart), but it may also refer to the Liver. Distended and dark sublingual veins are more common in the elderly, and they give an early indication of Blood stasis before the rest of the tongue-body becomes Purple. Observation of the sublingual veins therefore has an important preventative value. Dark and dry sublingual veins indicate severe Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. Dark, swollen and wet veins indicate Lung- Spleen- and Kidney deficiency with accumulation of fluids.

Such observation is important also in chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome. If the sublingual veins are reddish and shiny, they indicate Damp-Heat; if they are yellowish, Dampness, while if they are white and slippery, Cold-Dampness, and if they are swollen as well, Dampness and Blood stasis.

In modern China, some doctors consider the appearance of sublingual veins as a useful prodromal sign of certain diseases.¹ The main signs are as follows:

- Dark-purple: hardening of the brain arteries
- Distended, dark, and crooked: hardening of arteries, hypertension (if the veins protrude a lot and look like earthworms, the disease is severe)
- Small nodules like rice or wheat grains: hardening of arteries and heart disease

SUBLINGUAL VEINS

- Distended (not dark): Qi deficiency
- Thin: Yin deficiency
- Distended and dark: Blood stasis in the Upper Burner
- Dark and dry: severe Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
- Dark, swollen and wet: Lung- Spleen- and Kidney deficiency with accumulation of fluids
- Reddish and shiny: Damp-Heat
- Yellowish: Dampness
- White and slippery: Cold-Dampness
- Swollen, white and sticky: Dampness and Blood stasis

SUBLINGUAL VEINS IN WESTERN MEDICINE

- Dark-purple: hardening of the brain arteries
- Distended, dark, and crooked: hardening of arteries, hypertension (if the veins protrude a lot and look like earthworms, the disease is severe)
- Small nodules like rice or wheat grains: hardening of arteries and heart disease



CHAPTER 24 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The principle that the tongue spirit reflects the state of Kidney Essence and therefore the prognosis.
- The clinical significance of the three pathological colours: Pale, Red, and Purple as overall body colours or applicable to specific areas.
- The importance of the observation of the sublingual veins.

END NOTE

1. Zhang Shu Min, The diagnostic significance of sub-lingual veins in arteriosclerosis (*She Xia Mai Luo Zai Zhen Duan Dong Mai Ying Hua Zhong de Yi Yi*). Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), No. 12, 2000, p. 759.

25

Tongue-Body Shape

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Thin
Swollen
Partially swollen
Stiff
Flaccid
Long
Short
Cracked
Deviated
Moving
Quivering
Tooth-marked

3. Partially swollen
4. Stiff
5. Flaccid
6. Long
7. Short
8. Cracked
9. Deviated
10. Moving
11. Quivering
12. Tooth marked

1. THIN

'Thin' refers to the thickness, not the width, of the tongue. The 'body' of the tongue is formed by fluids and Blood; therefore, a Thin tongue always indicates a deficiency either of Blood or of Yin fluids. In the former case, it will also be Pale, whereas in the latter case it will be Red.

A Thin tongue is actually not common, probably because Dampness and Phlegm, which make the tongue Swollen, are such common and predominant pathogenic factors. Because they tend to make the tongue Swollen, even if the patient has a concurrent severe Blood or Yin deficiency, this would not manifest in the tongue-body shape. In my practice, for example, of 2378 patients fewer than 2% have a Thin tongue, whereas nearly 37% have a Swollen tongue.

2. SWOLLEN

The size of the tongue-body has to be related to the size of the head of the person; what might be 'Swollen' for someone may be normal for another (Fig. 25.1). Because the thickness of the tongue-body depends on the supply of fluids and Blood, a Swollen tongue-body indicates an accumulation of fluids, which may be Dampness, Phlegm, or oedema. Thus swelling of the tongue always indicates a Full condition particularly characterized by

Observation of the tongue-body shape reveals primarily conditions of Deficiency or Excess. It also adds information to that gleaned from observation of the tongue-body colour. For example, a Pale tongue may indicate Yang deficiency; however, if in addition to being Pale the tongue is also very Swollen, this indicates that the Yang deficiency is severe and that it has led to the accumulation of Dampness or Phlegm. In this example, the tongue-body shape reflects the Full condition generated by Dampness or Phlegm.

To give another example, if a tongue lacks coating, it indicates Yin deficiency – however, if in addition it is Thin, this indicates that the Yin deficiency is quite severe. In this example the tongue-body shape reflects the severity of a Deficiency condition. To give yet another example, if the tip of the tongue is Red, it indicates Heart-Heat or Heart-Fire, usually deriving from emotional problems; however, if the tip is also swollen, it indicates that a condition of Heart-Heat or Heart-Fire is more severe.

The tongue-body shapes discussed are:

1. Thin
2. Swollen



Figure 25.1. Swollen tongue body.

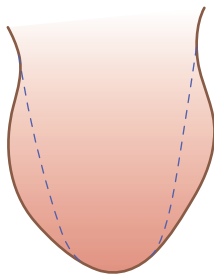


Figure 25.2. Swelling in the Liver area.

Dampness or Phlegm. Although Dampness and Phlegm usually arise from a Qi or Yang deficiency, the swelling of the tongue-body reflects the Full condition created by these two pathogenic factors.

3. PARTIALLY SWOLLEN

Although a total swelling of the tongue always indicates Dampness or Phlegm, a partial swelling may indicate other pathologies, such as Qi deficiency, Qi stagnation, or Heat. The areas where a partial swelling is most commonly seen are the sides in the Liver or chest area, the tip, and the front third.

- A swelling on the sides in the Liver area is very common and usually indicates Liver-Heat; it is nearly always associated with a Red colour in the same area (Fig. 25.2).
- A swelling on the sides in the chest/breast area generally indicates either retention of Phlegm in the chest or breast or Lung-Qi deficiency (Fig. 25.3).

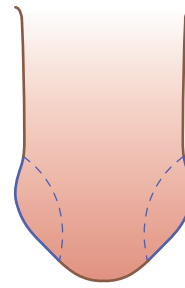


Figure 25.3. Swelling in the chest/breast area.

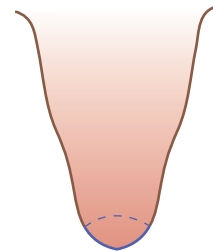


Figure 25.4. Swelling of the tip of the tongue.

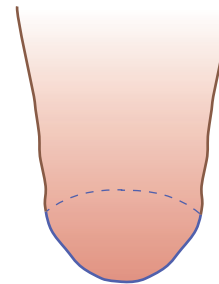


Figure 25.5. Swelling of the front third of the tongue.

- A swelling of the tip of the tongue, usually associated with a Red colour, is very common and indicates Heart-Heat or Heart-Fire deriving from severe emotional problems (Fig. 25.4).
- A swelling of the front third of the tongue indicates retention of Phlegm in the Lungs (Figs. 25.5 and 25.6).

4. STIFF

A Stiff tongue lacks normal suppleness and flexibility; it looks hard and stiff. It indicates internal Wind, Blood stasis, or severe Yin deficiency (Fig. 25.7).



Figure 25.6. Swelling of the front third of the tongue (Lung area).



Figure 25.7. Stiff tongue body (this tongue is also very Purple).

5. FLACCID

A flaccid tongue is flabby and in severe cases has a crumpled look. It always indicates lack of body fluids or Blood.

6. LONG

A Long tongue is rather narrow and when extended protrudes farther than normal. Not commonly seen, it always indicates Heat.

7. SHORT

A Short tongue appears to be contracted, and the patient is unable to extend it from the mouth cavity. The significance of the Short tongue depends on the body colour

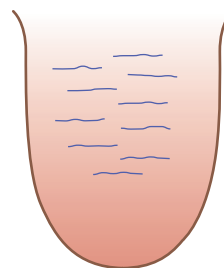


Figure 25.8. Horizontal cracks.

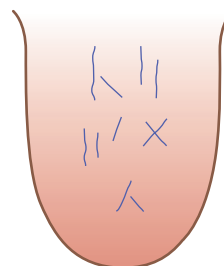


Figure 25.9. Irregular cracks.

because it can indicate two opposite conditions – if it is Pale, it indicates severe internal Cold and Yang deficiency; if it is Red and without a coating, it indicates severe Yin deficiency. In the first instance, the patient cannot extend the tongue enough because internal Cold contracts the muscles, whereas in the latter instance he or she cannot do so because there are not enough fluids in the tongue.

8. CRACKED

Generally, cracks on the surface of the tongue indicate Yin deficiency or the tendency to it; however, although this is the most common cause, there are others, such as Dampness or deficiency of the Original Qi. Horizontal cracks indicate Yin deficiency, usually of the Stomach and/or Kidneys, and they are more commonly seen in the elderly (Fig. 25.8).

Irregular cracks usually indicate Stomach-Yin deficiency or the tendency to it (Figs. 25.9 and 25.10).

A central short crack in the midline of the tongue is very common and indicates Stomach-Yin deficiency or the tendency to it (Figs. 25.11 and 25.12).

A central long crack in the midline of the tongue is also common; its clinical significance depends on its



Figure 25.10. Irregular cracks.

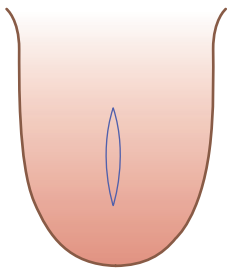


Figure 25.11. Stomach crack.



Figure 25.12. Stomach crack.

depth and on the colour of the tongue-body, especially the tip (Figs. 25.13–25.15).

If the Heart crack is shallow and the body colour normal, this simply indicates a constitutional tendency to Heart patterns and does not have a specific clinical

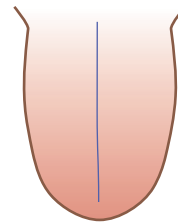


Figure 25.13. Heart crack.



Figure 25.14. Heart crack.



Figure 25.15. Heart crack.

significance. However, if a person has such a crack, any emotional stress from which he or she might suffer will have deeper repercussions than for someone without a Heart crack. According to Dr. J.H.F. Shen, a shallow Heart crack with a normal body colour may also indicate heart disease in the parents or even grandparents.

If the Heart crack is deep, it indicates that the person may suffer from a Heart pattern due to emotional stress,

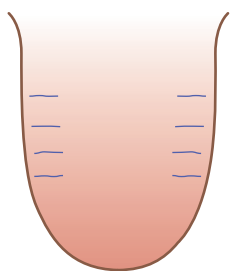


Figure 25.16. Transverse Spleen cracks.

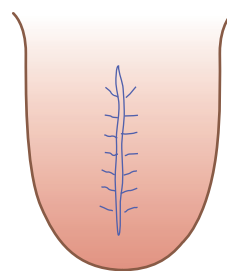


Figure 25.18. Deep midline crack with small cracks.

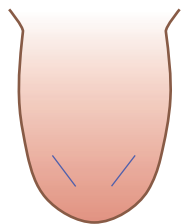


Figure 25.17. Lung cracks.



Figure 25.19. Deviated tongue.

all the more so if the tip is also Red. The following are different situations of emotional stress, in order of increasing severity, as manifested on the tongue:

- Shallow Heart crack, normal body colour
- No Heart crack, Red tip
- Deep Heart crack, normal body colour
- Shallow Heart crack, Red tip
- Deep Heart crack, Red tip
- Deep Heart crack, Red tip with red points
- Deep Heart crack, Red tongue with redder tip and red points
- Deep Heart crack, Red tongue with redder and swollen tip and red points

Short, transverse cracks on the sides are a clear sign of Spleen-Yin deficiency. This is not common, and it is not a condition often described among the Spleen patterns; such cracks are the easiest way to identify such a pattern (Fig. 25.16; also see Fig. 25.12).

Short, transverse cracks behind the tip in the Lung area usually indicate a past Lung pathology such as pneumonia, whooping cough or repeated lung infections during childhood. As such cracks reflect past pathologies, they do not have a major clinical significance (Fig. 25.17).

An extremely deep midline crack with other small cracks branching out from it, usually seen in a Red tongue without a coating, indicates a severe Kidney-Yin

deficiency with Empty Heat in the Kidneys and Heart (Fig. 25.18).

9. DEVIATED

The Deviated tongue turns to one side when extended (Fig. 25.19).

The most common clinical significance of a Deviated tongue is internal Wind, and this type of tongue is most commonly seen in the elderly. In a young person it may be related to a Heart deficiency.

10. MOVING

The Moving tongue moves *slowly* from side to side with large-amplitude movements when it is extended, and the patient cannot control its movement. It always indicates internal Wind and is usually seen in the elderly.

11. QUIVERING

The Quivering tongue trembles *rapidly* with small-amplitude movements as it is extended. The most

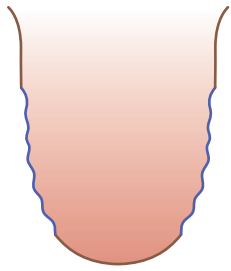


Figure 25.20. Tongue with teeth marks.

common clinical significance of a Quivering tongue in chronic conditions is Spleen-Qi or Spleen-Yang deficiency.

12. TOOTH-MARKED

The tongue with teeth marks indicates chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency; however, because a tongue with a normal body shape can have teeth marks, do not assume that the presence of teeth marks necessarily means the tongue is Swollen (Figs. 25.20 and 25.21).



Figure 25.21. Teeth marks.



CHAPTER 25 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The ways observation of the tongue-body shape supplement knowledge gained from observation of the tongue-body colour.
- The clinical significance of the various tongue presentations: thin, completely or partially swollen, stiff, flaccid, long, short, cracked, deviated, moving, quivery, and tooth marked.

26

Tongue Coating

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Physiology of the tongue coating
Clinical significance of the tongue coating
Presence or absence of a coating
Coating with or without root
Coating thickness
Coating distribution
Coating moisture
Coating texture
Sticky coating
Slippery coating
Mouldy coating
Tongue coating in external diseases

The discussion of the clinical significance of tongue coating will proceed in the following order:

1. Physiology of the tongue coating
2. Clinical significance of the tongue coating
3. Presence or absence of a coating
4. Coating with or without root
5. Coating thickness
6. Coating distribution
7. Coating moisture
8. Coating texture
9. Tongue coating in external diseases

1. PHYSIOLOGY OF THE TONGUE COATING

The Stomach rots and ripens food, and during the process of digestion a small amount of what the ancient Chinese books called 'turbidity' or 'turbid fluids' escapes upwards to reach the tongue – this forms a coating. Therefore, the presence of a coating indicates the normal functioning of Stomach-Qi. A normal coating should be white and thin enough to see the body colour through it. Although the tongue coating reflects primarily the physiological activity of the Stomach, the Spleen and

Kidneys also play a role in its formation; for this reason, if a tongue lacks a coating, this may indicate Stomach-Yin and/or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

It should be noted that the tongue coating is naturally thicker at the root of the tongue and thinnest towards the tip and that the coating does not extend to the very edges of the tongue.

2. CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TONGUE COATING

The tongue coating reflects primarily the state of the Yang organs, especially the Stomach. It also reflects conditions of Deficiency or Excess and of Heat or Cold.

Observation of the tongue coating needs to be based on a careful analysis of the history of the patient because the tongue coating changes very rapidly in acute conditions and can reflect short-term variations. For example, a yellow tongue coating in the centre indicates Stomach-Heat, which equally could be a chronic condition of Stomach-Heat or simply an acute stomach upset. We therefore need to enquire carefully to exclude the possibility that the yellow coating merely reflects an acute but passing condition. Apart from the history, the brightness of the coating can give us an indication of its duration – the duller the coating, the more chronic the condition.

Because the coating reflects primarily the condition of the Yang organs, its thickness and particularly its distribution give a clear indication of a pathology affecting one of the Yang organs. For example, the sides of the tongue reflect the condition of the Liver and Gall-Bladder, and we can differentiate between these two by referring to the body colour or coating; specifically, if the body colour is affected, it indicates a Liver pathology, whereas if the coating is affected, it indicates a Gall-Bladder pathology. Similarly for the root of the tongue: if the root of the tongue is Red and without a coating, it indicates Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat.

If it has a thick coating, it indicates a pathology of one of the Yang organs of the Lower Burner (Bladder or Intestines).

The tongue coating also gives us a good indication of Deficiency and Excess conditions. For example, a thick coating with a root always reflects a Full condition, whereas a coating without a root, or the complete absence of a coating, always reflects a Deficiency condition. This will be described in more detail later in the chapter.

The tongue coating also gives a very clear indication of the Hot or Cold nature of a condition; however, as indicated above, it may merely reflect a passing acute condition.



CLINICAL NOTE

Clinical significance of tongue coating:

- Yang organs
- Deficiency-Excess
- Heat-Cold

3. PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF A COATING

The presence or absence of a coating tells us primarily about the state of Stomach-Qi. If the tongue has a coating with root, it indicates that Stomach-Qi is still intact, even if the excessive thickness or colour of the coating is pathological. Excluding the case of a normal, thin-white coating, the tongue with a coating usually indicates a Full condition precisely because Stomach-Qi is intact. A tongue without a coating indicates that Stomach-Qi is severely weakened and a Deficiency condition exists. Therefore, it is better to have a thick, pathological coating with root than not to have a coating.

How does the coating disappear from the tongue's surface? In chronic conditions, the tongue coating disappears gradually over a long time (usually years); in acute conditions, especially acute, febrile diseases in children, the coating may disappear very quickly, in a matter of days.

In chronic conditions characterized by the absence of a coating, with treatment the coating should return gradually and quite slowly; this is a positive sign. If the coating appears suddenly on a tongue that previously lacked it, this is a bad sign; for example, in a patient with cancer, the sudden return of the coating to a

particular area of the tongue may indicate a metastasis to the corresponding organ. Conversely, if a tongue has a very thick, pathological coating, its sudden total or partial disappearance in the course of a disease is a poor prognostic sign because it indicates the sudden depletion of Stomach-Qi. However, the clinical significance is different if a thick tongue coating becomes normal as a result of treatment; as indicated above, the tongue coating can change much more quickly than the tongue-body colour.

4. COATING WITH OR WITHOUT ROOT

We can compare the tongue coating to grass; it should 'grow' out of the tongue-body just as grass grows out of the soil, and it should have 'roots' just as grass-stems have roots in the earth. A coating with root reflects the normal functioning of Stomach-Qi, even if the coating may be pathological (e.g. too thick and dark-yellow). A coating without root resembles mown grass scattered on barren ground; it looks as if it has been 'added' on top of the tongue rather than growing out of it (Fig. 26.1A–C). In severe conditions the rootless coating may look like salt or snow sprinkled on top of the tongue. A rootless coating indicates the beginning of the weakening of Stomach-Qi in the course of a chronic disease. Therefore, it is better to have a thick, pathological coating with a root than to have a thin coating without a root.

It should be emphasized that the coating with root is not necessarily thin, although that is the most common situation. The coating without root can also be thick and often sticky; this represents the worst scenario because it indicates that, on the one hand, Stomach-Qi is weakened, and on the other hand, there is a significant pathogenic factor (against which the body is unable to fight due to the Stomach-Qi deficiency). For this reason, it is obviously better to have a thin rather than a thick coating without root.

To summarize, four different situations of tongue coating can be described (Fig. 26.2):

- a) a thin coating with a root: healthy Stomach-Qi
- b) a thick coating with a root: strong pathogenic factor, Stomach-Qi still intact
- c) a thin coating without a root: beginning of weakening of Stomach-Qi
- d) a thick coating without root: strong pathogenic factor, Stomach-Qi weakened



Figure 26.1. (A) Coating without root. (B) Coating without root. (C) Coating without root (in Gall-Bladder area).

5. COATING THICKNESS

The normal coating is thin, and it should be possible to see the tongue-body through it. If the tongue-body cannot be seen, the tongue coating is too thick. The

Coating with Root

- Thin = Stomach-Qi healthy
- Thick = Pathogenic factors

Coating without Root

- Thin = Stomach-Qi weakened
- Thick = Strong pathogenic factors, Stomach-Qi weakened

Figure 26.2. Clinical significance of coating with or without root according to thickness.

thickness of the tongue coating reflects the strength of the pathogenic factor clearly and accurately – the thicker the coating, the stronger the pathogenic factor. If a thin coating becomes thick, it indicates that the pathogenic factors are getting stronger or that they are penetrating deeper into the Interior (the latter situation applies to conditions of acute external diseases; these are explained in greater detail later in the chapter). Therefore, if we are treating a patient with a thick tongue coating, we should expect it to become gradually thinner. In some cases, a thick tongue coating can revert to normal even after a very short time.

As mentioned above, a thick coating may be with or without root, but the clinical significance of its thickness is the same – it reflects the strength of a pathogenic factor.

6. COATING DISTRIBUTION

Generally speaking, the same areas that reflect changes in the tongue-body colour reflect changes in the tongue coating, although there are some differences. For example, the tongue coating never extends to the very tip or the very edges of the tongue.

The most common locations where a thick coating is observed are in the centre and on the root of the tongue. A thick coating in the centre reflects the presence of a pathogenic factor in the Stomach – this may be Cold, Heat, Dampness, or Phlegm, depending on the colour and consistency of the coating; a thick coating on the root, however, reflects the presence of a pathogenic factor in the Bladder or Intestines.

A pathogenic factor in the Gall-Bladder may be manifested in a variety of ways; the most common one is a bilateral or unilateral coating that comes forward in one or two strips on the edges (Figs. 26.3 and 26.4).

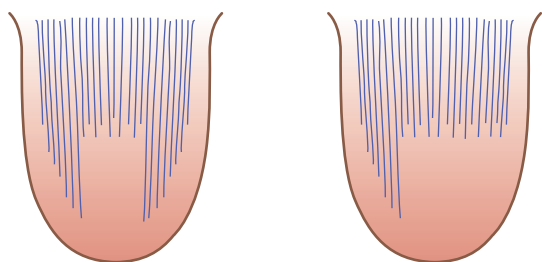


Figure 26.3. Coating in the Gall-Bladder area.



Figure 26.5. Sticky coating.



Figure 26.4. Coating in Gall-Bladder area.

7. COATING MOISTURE

The normal coating should be relatively moist, indicating a good supply and movement of body fluids. If the coating is too dry, it indicates either Heat or Yin deficiency. If the coating is too wet, it indicates severe Yang deficiency.

8. COATING TEXTURE

The normal coating texture should be like the hairs of a very fine brush – in Western medicine, corresponding to the filiform papillae. The individual ‘hairs’ (filiform papillae) should be clearly seen, and they should not be too dry or too wet. Pathological textures of the coating make it sticky, slippery, or mouldy.

a) Sticky coating

The sticky (also called greasy) coating has an oily but coarse appearance, and the individual papillae can still be seen. To visualize a sticky coating, one can use the

analogy of a toothbrush of very fine, natural hair spread with butter or lard: the toothbrush will appear very greasy but the individual hairs can still be seen. Thus, although the sticky coating is greasy and oily, it may also be, in addition, dry. This may seem a contradiction, but it is not. To use the same analogy, we can think of a toothbrush with very fine hairs that has been spread with butter and left for several days; after that time, it will still have a greasy appearance, but it will be dry. Thus, we should not identify ‘stickiness’ of the tongue coating with wetness ([Fig. 26.5](#)).

The sticky coating indicates either Dampness or Phlegm, especially the latter. The sticky coating is extremely common; in my practice, of a database of 2378 patients, nearly 30% have such a coating.

b) Slippery coating

The slippery coating has a greasy look. It is characterized by the fact that the individual papillae cannot be easily distinguished because they seem to be covered by an oily fluid. To compare the slippery coating to the sticky coating: the former is oilier, and the individual papillae cannot be distinguished, whereas the latter is coarser, and the individual papillae can be distinguished. The slippery coating, like the sticky coating, indicates Dampness or Phlegm, but predominantly Dampness.

c) Mouldy coating

The mouldy coating looks thick, patchy, and crumbly; Chinese books describe it as ‘tofu’; to use a Western analogy, it could be described as cottage cheese. The

mouldy coating also looks greasy and is by definition without root.

The mouldy coating also indicates Dampness or Phlegm, but against a background of Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. Empty Heat plays a role in the formation of the Phlegm indicated by the mouldy coating in evaporating the fluids. The mouldy coating is seen only in the elderly.

9. TONGUE COATING IN EXTERNAL DISEASES

In external diseases from invasion of Wind, the interpretation of the tongue coating is quite different from that of internal diseases.

In external diseases the thickness of the coating reflects not only the intensity of the pathogenic factor, but also its progression towards the Interior. Thus, if in the course of an acute external disease the coating becomes thicker, it indicates that not only has the pathogenic factor become stronger, but also that it is beginning to penetrate into the Interior.

The coating in external diseases reflects Hot and Cold influences in the same way as in internal diseases, but there are differences. The most important difference is that the coating tends to be white in the very beginning stages of an invasion of Wind, even if it is Wind-Heat. If during an acute external disease the coating turns

from white to yellow, it means not only a change from Cold to Heat (although a white coating may appear in Wind-Heat, too), but also a penetration of the pathogenic factor into the Interior.

The distribution of the coating also reflects the stages of penetration of an external pathogenic factor. In the very beginning stages of an invasion of external Wind, the coating may be more concentrated on the front third or on the sides. In this context these two areas correspond to the Exterior of the body, whereas the centre of the tongue corresponds to the Interior (see Fig. 24.8). Thus, if after a few days the coating from these two areas extends towards the centre of the tongue, it indicates that a pathogenic factor is penetrating into the Interior.



CHAPTER 26 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The coating primarily reflects the health of the Stomach and Spleen, but also may indicate a Kidney-Yin deficiency.
- The coating also reflects conditions of Deficiency or Excess, and Heat or Cold.
- Tongue observation should be supported by the pathology history.
- The aspects of the tongue coating that are clinically significant, specifically: its presence or absence; the presence or absence of a root; the coating's thickness, distribution, moisture, and texture; and its interpretation in external disease.

Tongue Images and Patterns

27

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Qi deficiency
Yang deficiency
Blood deficiency
Yin deficiency
Phlegm and dampness
Heat
Cold
Qi stagnation and blood stasis
Internal wind
External invasions of wind

This chapter will describe the tongue's appearance in the most common patterns, as follows:

1. Qi Deficiency
2. Yang Deficiency
3. Blood Deficiency
4. Yin Deficiency
5. Phlegm and Dampness
6. Heat
7. Cold
8. Qi and Blood stagnation
9. Internal Wind
10. External Wind

1. QI DEFICIENCY

The tongue-body colour reflects primarily the condition of Blood rather than Qi; therefore, a mild deficiency of Qi may not manifest on the tongue at all. In long-standing cases of Qi deficiency, the tongue may become slightly Pale.

Severe Spleen-Qi deficiency may manifest with a swelling on the sides of the tongue in the central section (Figs. 27.1 and 27.2). This swelling differs from a Liver

swelling in that it is much wider and more in the central section of the tongue (Middle Burner).

Stomach-Qi deficiency manifests with a rootless coating or with lack of coating in the centre (with the tongue-body colour still normal).

2. YANG DEFICIENCY

In Yang deficiency the tongue is definitely Pale and tends also to be slightly wet. In severe Yang deficiency, the tongue may also become Swollen, but the swelling itself is due to the presence of Dampness or Phlegm, rather than the Yang deficiency itself.



A Swollen tongue does not indicate Yang deficiency, but rather Dampness or Phlegm.

When the tongue is Pale, one cannot generally identify which is the main organ involved. For example, the tongue's Paleness may be due to Spleen-Yang deficiency, Kidney-Yang deficiency, or both, and we cannot deduce from the tongue only which is the case. The only guideline one can follow is that the paler and the more Swollen the tongue is, the more likely it is that the cause is Kidney-Yang deficiency.

3. BLOOD DEFICIENCY

In Blood deficiency the tongue is also Pale but tends to be slightly dry. In severe cases of Blood deficiency, the tongue should be Thin as well as Pale, but for reasons explained above, this is seldom the case.

Liver-Blood deficiency is frequently indicated by a Pale colour on the sides in the Liver area. Although the tip corresponds to the Heart, it is never Pale on its own in Heart-Blood deficiency; in this condition, however, the tongue may become Pale in the chest area. The chest area is indicated in Fig. 23.8.

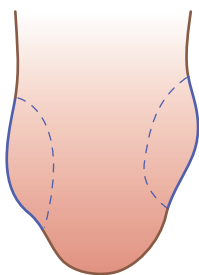


Figure 27.1. Swelling on the sides from Spleen deficiency.



Figure 27.2. Swelling on the sides from Spleen deficiency.

4. YIN DEFICIENCY

The tongue coating is formed during the process of the Stomach's digestion of food. As we have seen above, the normal tongue should have a thin, white coating, which indicates a good state of Stomach-Qi. The normal coating is formed by the "turbid fluids" produced by the Stomach's process of digestion; it therefore is an expression of the normal state of Stomach fluids and therefore Qi and Yin.

If Stomach-Qi is weakened, the very first sign of this on the tongue will be a rootless coating in the centre; if Stomach-Qi gets weaker, the coating will be rootless all over the tongue; and if Stomach-Qi deficiency progresses to Stomach-Yin deficiency, the tongue will lack a coating entirely. Because the Stomach is the origin of fluids, a tongue without a coating always indicates a deficiency of Stomach-Yin. Of course, a tongue without a coating is also seen in deficiency of Yin of other organs; regardless of whichever organ is involved, a tongue without a coating always indicates

Stomach-Yin deficiency. For example, the tongue may lack a coating in the front, indicating Lung-Yin deficiency; however, because the coating is a reflection of Stomach-Qi and Stomach-Yin, we can say that in this case there is a deficiency of Yin of both the Lungs and Stomach. In treatment this means that whenever we see a tongue without a coating, Stomach-Yin should always be nourished, regardless of whatever other organ is involved.

It is most important to stress that Yin deficiency on the tongue is manifested by the lack of a coating and *not* by the redness of the tongue-body. Thus, if a tongue has a normal body colour but lacks a coating, we can say this indicates Yin deficiency; if the tongue-body is Red but lacks a coating, this indicates Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. Therefore, the lack of a coating by itself indicates Yin deficiency, whereas the lack of a coating associated with redness of the tongue-body indicates Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. In other words, although Empty Heat arises from Yin deficiency eventually, especially in its beginning stages Yin deficiency may and does occur frequently without Empty Heat, in which case the tongue lacks a coating but is not Red.



Remember: Yin deficiency is manifested by the lack of coating, not by the redness of the tongue – specifically:

- Lack of coating: Yin deficiency
- Lack of coating and redness: Yin deficiency and Empty Heat

We can look upon Stomach-Yin deficiency as the beginning of a Yin deficiency that will eventually affect other organs. However, that does not mean that a Yin deficiency is always indicated by Stomach-Yin deficiency. For example, it is quite possible for someone to suffer from Lung-Yin deficiency without Stomach-Yin deficiency manifesting on the tongue coating. However, if the Yin deficiency manifests with a lack of coating, we can say that there is some underlying Stomach-Yin deficiency.

We can identify several stages of Yin deficiency according to the tongue coating and the body colour. As far as the Stomach is concerned, Stomach-Qi deficiency usually precedes Stomach-Yin deficiency, and the very first and least serious sign of Stomach-Qi deficiency would be a rootless coating in the centre. At the other end of the scale, the most severe type of Yin deficiency (by this time with Empty Heat) would be a tongue that

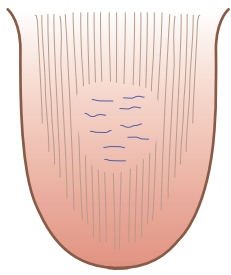


Figure 27.3. Tongue with rootless coating in the centre.

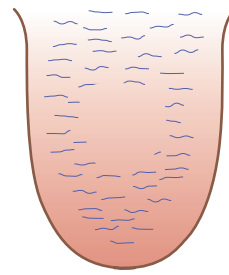


Figure 27.5. Tongue with rootless coating all over but missing in the centre.

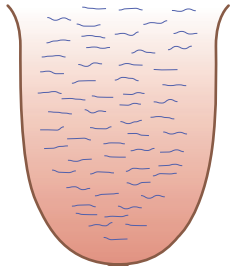


Figure 27.4. Tongue with rootless coating all over.

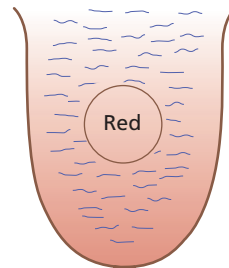


Figure 27.6. Tongue with rootless coating all over, missing in the centre, and Red in the centre.

is Red, completely without a coating, and possibly with cracks, indicating both Stomach-Yin and Kidney-Yin deficiency. We therefore can say that the absence or presence of a tongue coating reflects a progression from Qi deficiency to Yin deficiency, usually starting with the Stomach and gradually affecting other organs.

The most common stages of this process that we can identify are:

1. Normal tongue with thin-white coating with root: good Stomach-Qi
2. Rootless coating in the centre, normal body colour: beginning of Stomach-Qi deficiency (Fig. 27.3)
3. Rootless coating all over, normal body colour: Stomach-Qi deficiency (Fig. 27.4; also see Fig. 26.1A and Fig. 26.1B)
4. Rootless coating all over but missing in the centre, normal body colour: beginning of Stomach-Yin deficiency (Fig. 27.5). A variation of this tongue would be a centre that is Red (Fig. 27.6), which would indicate Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat (not affecting other organs).
5. Coating missing all over, normal body colour: advanced Stomach-Yin deficiency. A variation of this tongue would be a Red centre, which would indicate advanced Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat (not affecting other organs).

Red - no coating

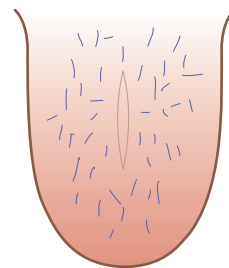


Figure 27.7. Tongue with no coating; Red body colour; deep, midline Stomach crack; and other, scattered Stomach cracks.

6. Coating missing all over, Red body colour: advanced Yin deficiency with Empty Heat of the Stomach and other organs, notably the Kidneys. A variation of this tongue would include the additional signs of a deep, midline Stomach crack and other scattered cracks; this would indicate a more severe condition of Yin deficiency of the Stomach and Kidneys (Fig. 27.7).

Any of the tongues described above in 1 to 5 could have a central Stomach crack or scattered Stomach cracks (see Figs. 27.3–27.7), which would simply indicate a pre-existing tendency to Stomach-Yin deficiency.



TREATMENT NOTE

To nourish Stomach-Yin, I use Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli and SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

5. PHLEGM AND DAMPNES

Both Phlegm and Dampness may manifest with a Swollen tongue and a sticky coating. However, in the case of Phlegm, the swelling of the tongue is predominant, whereas in the case of Dampness, the coating is predominant. Both Phlegm and Dampness may derive from Qi deficiency, but Qi deficiency on its own does *not* cause the tongue to be Swollen; therefore, a Swollen tongue does not indicate Qi deficiency, but rather the presence of a pathogenic factor (i.e. Phlegm or Dampness).

The tongue coating will differ slightly depending on whether there is Dampness or Phlegm present. Dampness causes the coating to appear more slippery and smooth, whereas a coating indicating Phlegm tends to be slightly rough and sticky.

6. HEAT

Heat always manifests with a Red body colour. When examining a Red tongue, the first question I ask myself is whether the tongue has a coating or not; a Red tongue with a coating with root (whatever its colour) indicates Full Heat, whereas a Red tongue without a coating (or with a rootless coating) indicates Empty Heat.



- Red tongue with coating: Full Heat
- Red tongue without coating: Empty Heat

When observing a Red tongue indicating Heat, we should identify the level of the Heat in accordance with the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels. Although the theory of the Four Levels was developed to explain the symptoms and signs of acute febrile diseases, it can be applied to conditions of chronic Heat. Indeed, much of the knowledge regarding Red tongues and red points derives from the theory of the Four Levels.

At the Defensive-Qi level, the tongue may be Red or slightly Red on the front and/or sides in the areas corresponding to the Exterior in the context of invasions of external Wind (see [Fig. 23.4](#)).

At the Qi level, the tongue is Red with a yellow, dark-yellow, brown, or even black coating. However, within the Qi level, one can distinguish the two conditions of Heat or Fire. Heat is more superficial than Fire and can be cleared with pungent-cold herbs. Fire is deeper than Heat and needs to be drained with bitter-cold herbs. Within the theory of the Six Stages, the Bright-Yang Channel Pattern corresponds to Heat (of the Stomach) and the Bright-Yang Organ Pattern corresponds to Fire. Within the theory of the Four Levels the pattern of Stomach-Heat corresponds to Heat, whereas that of Dry Heat in the Stomach and Intestines corresponds to Fire. The tongue corresponding to Heat is Red with a yellow coating, whereas that corresponding to Fire is darker Red with a dry, dark-yellow, brown, or even black coating.

At the Nutritive-Qi and Blood levels, the tongue is Red without a coating because at these levels the Fire has injured Yin.

FOUR LEVELS ASSESSMENT OF THE TONGUE

- Defensive-Qi level: slightly Red on the sides and/or front
- Qi level: Red with dark-yellow coating
- Nutritive-Qi level: Red without coating
- Blood level: dark-Red without coating, dry

7. COLD

Cold affecting a Yin organ will manifest primarily in the tongue-body colour, which becomes Pale. For example, Spleen-Yang deficiency commonly manifests with a Pale tongue. Cold affecting a Yang organ will manifest primarily in the tongue coating. For example, Cold in the Stomach manifests with a white coating in the centre.

When assessing the tongue in Cold patterns, we must distinguish Full from Empty Cold. Full Cold manifests primarily in the coating which becomes thick and white, whereas Empty Cold manifests primarily in the colour and moisture of the tongue-body, which becomes Pale and slightly wet.

8. QI AND BLOOD STAGNATION

The tongue-body colour reflects the condition of Blood more than that of Qi. Therefore, in conditions of Qi stagnation, the tongue-body colour may be unchanged, whereas in Blood stasis the tongue-body colour will become Purple. Chinese books frequently state that Liver-Qi stagnation manifests with a Purple tongue, but

I disagree with this; in my opinion, a Purple colour on the sides always indicates Blood stasis.

In severe and long-standing conditions of Liver-Qi stagnation, the sides in the Liver area may become Red. However, in this case, too, we can say that the tongue-body colour may reflect the condition of Blood primarily because the redness of the sides of the tongue indicates that long-standing Qi stagnation has given rise to Heat. Thus, the redness on the sides reflects the Heat rather than the Qi stagnation.

Blood stasis may manifest also with a Purple and dark colour of the sublingual veins. As mentioned above, this normally reflects the early stages of Blood stasis, particularly when it occurs in the Middle and Upper Burners.



A purple tongue indicates Blood stasis, not Qi stagnation!

9. INTERNAL WIND

In internal Wind, the tongue may be Stiff, Moving, or Deviated. Stiff is probably the most common way in which internal Wind manifests; the Moving tongue is not frequently seen; and the Deviated tongue, indicating internal Wind, is usually seen only in patients suffering from Wind-Stroke.

10. EXTERNAL INVASIONS OF WIND

As far as the body colour is concerned, in external invasions of Wind-Cold, the tongue-body colour does not change. In invasions of Wind-Heat, the tongue-body colour may become Red in the front and/or sides; in addition, especially in children, it may have red points in these areas.

As far as the coating is concerned, this reflects invasions of external Wind only when the pathogenic factor is particularly strong, in which case the coating becomes thick. In the very beginning stages of invasion of Wind, the coating is white even with Wind-Heat; in other words, in the context of external invasions of Wind, a white colour of the coating indicates the early stage of invasion, whereas a yellow colour indicates a later stage.



CHAPTER 27 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The appearance of the tongue with a deficiency of Qi, Yang, Blood, and Yin.
- The appearance of the tongue in Phlegm and Dampness; with Heat, Cold, Qi stagnation and Blood stasis; and with Internal and External Wind.

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PART 2

Diagnosis by Interrogation

Part 2 deals with the diagnostic method based on asking (interrogation). This is the central art of diagnosis not only because we need to elicit information from the patient but also because the *way* the patient talks during the interrogation is in itself a very important diagnostic sign reflecting the underlying physical, emotional and mental condition of the patient. Moreover, it is through the interrogation process that we interact with the patient; therefore, the skill, tact and compassion with which we conduct the interrogation has a profound influence on the therapeutic results themselves.

Thus, the process of 'interrogation' of the patient is far more than a set of rules about which questions to ask and how to ask them. It is the heart of the therapeutic encounter between the practitioner and the patient; it is the crucible in which the healing takes place.

Diagnosis by interrogation is one of the four pillars of the Chinese diagnostic methods and one that should always be carried out. If the patient is unconscious or is a baby or a small child, the questions should be put to a close relative.

The discussion of the interrogation procedure will be articulated under the following headings (Chapter 28):

1. Nature of diagnosis by interrogation
2. Nature of 'symptoms' in Chinese medicine
3. The art of interrogation: asking the right questions
4. Terminology problems in interrogation
5. Patients' expressions
6. Pitfalls to avoid in interrogation
7. Procedure for interrogation
8. Timescale of symptoms
9. Integration of interrogation with observation
10. Identification of patterns and interrogation
11. Tongue and pulse diagnosis: integration with interrogation
12. The 10 traditional questions
13. The 16 questions

Part 2 includes the following chapters:

- Chapter 28: Introduction
- Chapter 29: Pain
- Chapter 30: Food and taste
- Chapter 31: Stools and urine
- Chapter 32: Thirst and drink
- Chapter 33: Energy levels
- Chapter 34: Head
- Chapter 35: Face
- Chapter 36: Throat and neck
- Chapter 37: Body
- Chapter 38: Chest and abdomen
- Chapter 39: Limbs
- Chapter 40: Sleep
- Chapter 41: Sweating
- Chapter 42: Ears and eyes
- Chapter 43: Feeling of cold, feeling of heat and fever
- Chapter 44: Mental-emotional symptoms
- Chapter 45: Sexual symptoms
- Chapter 46: Women's symptoms
- Chapter 47: Children's symptoms
- Chapter 48: Diagnosing the causes of disease

Introduction

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Nature of diagnosis by interrogation*Su Wen, Chapter 77**Su Wen, Chapter 78***Nature of 'symptoms' in Chinese medicine***Tongue and pulse diagnosis: Integration with Interrogation
Case histories***The art of interrogation: asking the right questions****Terminology problems in interrogation****Patients' expressions****Pitfalls to avoid in interrogation****Procedure for interrogation****Timescale of symptoms****Integration of interrogation with observation****Identification of patterns and interrogation****Tongue and pulse diagnosis: integration with interrogation****The 10 traditional questions***Limitations of the 10 traditional questions**Questions on emotional state**Questions about sexual life**Questions on energy levels***The 16 questions**

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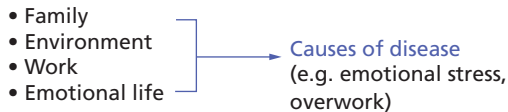
1. NATURE OF DIAGNOSIS BY INTERROGATION

We can distinguish two aspects to the interrogation: a general one and a specific one. In a *general* sense, the interrogation is the talk between doctor and patient to find out how the presenting problem arose, the living and working conditions of the patient and his or her emotional and family environment. The aim of an investigation of these aspects of the patient's life is ultimately to find the cause or causes of the disease rather than identify the pattern; finding the causes of the disease is important in order for the patient and doctor to work together to try to eliminate or minimize such causes (Fig. 28.1). How to find the cause of disease is discussed in [Chapter 48](#).

In a *specific* sense, the interrogation aims at identifying the prevailing pattern of disharmony in the light of whatever pattern identification is applicable, for example according to the Internal Organs, according to the channels, according to the Four Levels, etc.

It is important not to blur the distinction between these two aspects of interrogation: enquiring about the patient's family situation, environment, work and relationships gives us an idea of the *cause*, not the *pattern* of the disharmony.

General interrogation



Specific interrogation

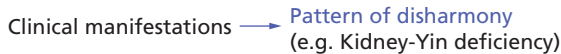


Figure 28.1. Interrogation.

THE TWO ASPECTS OF INTERROGATION

- **General:** asking about lifestyle, work, emotions, diet, etc. to determine the cause of disease
- **Specific:** asking about clinical manifestations to determine the patterns of disharmony



CLINICAL NOTE

When conducting the interrogation, I strongly recommend concentrating first (and only) on identifying the pattern of disharmony, not the cause of the disease. We should focus entirely on identifying the pathology, the pattern, the Empty or Full nature of the pathology, and the interaction among patterns. Mixing identifying the pattern with finding the cause of disease may only distract our mind from focussing closely on diagnosing the pattern and pathology. *After* identifying the pathology, I then proceed to ask the patient about his and her lifestyle in order to find the cause of the disease, which may be in the diet, emotions, work, sexual life, etc. I actually discuss causes of disease with the patient while he or she is having acupuncture (unless the patient is treated only with herbal medicine). Finally, we do not necessarily always identify the cause of disease during the initial consultation. The cause of disease may become more apparent after three or four consultations.

Knowing that a patient is a businessman with a heavy work burden, an antagonistic relationship with his employers or marital problems does not tell us which might be the prevailing *pattern* of disharmony but simply that stress and emotional tension are likely to be the *cause* of the disharmony; this knowledge is essential when working with the patient to try to eliminate or minimize the causes of disease.

During the course of the interrogation, we ask about many symptoms which may be apparently unrelated to the presenting problem; we do this in order to find the pattern (or patterns) of disharmony which underlie the presenting problem. For example, a patient may present with chronic backache which we suspect may

be due to a Kidney-Yang deficiency with Dampness. By asking about bowels and urination, for example, we may find that there are other symptoms of Dampness in one of these two systems, and this would confirm the original diagnosis of Dampness as the cause of the backache.

Not all symptoms and signs add up to one pattern of disharmony: indeed, most patients will suffer from at least two *related* patterns of disharmony. To use the previous example again, in this case, enquiring about urination and defecation may confirm that this patient does indeed suffer from Kidney-Yang deficiency with Dampness. These two patterns are related because deficient Kidney-Yang fails to warm, move, transform and excrete fluids properly, which may accumulate in the form of Dampness.

Moreover, an enquiry about other areas of questioning beyond the lower back and urination is always important because it may reveal other patterns of disharmony, which may be *unrelated* to the patterns of disharmony causing a patient's presenting symptoms. To continue the previous example, it may be that an enquiry about bowels, urination and other systems reveals a condition of Qi stagnation, which may be unrelated to the presenting problem.

Diagnosis by interrogation is intimately related to pattern identification: one cannot be carried out without a thorough knowledge of the other. Without a knowledge of pattern identification, interrogation would be a meaningless and aimless process of asking questions without a clear idea of what to make of the answers and how to use these to arrive at a diagnosis. On the other hand, a knowledge of pattern identification without a thorough understanding of diagnostic methods would be useless, as we would lack the skills and tools to arrive at a pattern identification. Thus, a knowledge of pattern identification is the essential prerequisite to form a diagnosis, but skill in the diagnostic art is the means by which a diagnosis is made.



Remember: The questions asked during the interrogation must always be guided by our attempt to confirm or exclude a pattern of disharmony.

a) Su Wen, Chapter 77

Whenever one diagnoses a patient, one has to enquire about the conditions of the patient's life. If the patient was noble before and now humble, although not attacked by an external pathogenic factor, the patient will suffer a disease from internal factors and loss of blood. If the

patient was rich in the past and now poor, he or she will suffer from loss of Essence caused by stagnation and accumulation. Even excellent doctors may make mistakes in treating this disease if they do not understand the pathology. This is the first error in treating diseases.

When diagnosing a patient, one must enquire about the diet and life habits to establish if he or she was happy and then became sad or vice versa. Such abnormal changes of emotions impair Essence-Qi. Exhaustion of Essence-Qi damages the body. Unskilled doctors know neither the ways to tonify or purge nor the pathology of the patient, resulting in gradual loss of Essence and exuberance of pathogenic factors. This is the second error in treating diseases.

If a doctor does not master pulse diagnosis, his or her diagnosis will not be worthy of any commendation. This is the third error in treating diseases.

In diagnosis, one must pay attention to three points. That is to ask the patient about his or her social position. A noble person who has lost his or her position will suffer from internal damage. The rich who lose their wealth will suffer from dry skin, contraction of sinews, flaccidity and spasm of feet. This is the fourth error in treating diseases.

When diagnosing a disease, doctors must know the past and present as well as the primary and secondary. Pulse examination should be done according to the physiological characteristics of men and women. Separation and the resulting depression (cause), worry, fear, joy and anger, which lead to deficiency of the Five Zang and separation of Blood and Qi. A doctor who cannot differentiate pathological conditions, does not enquire about the cause of the disease and only mentions the severity of the disease is certainly an unskilled doctor. This is the fifth error in treating diseases.¹

b) Su Wen, Chapter 78

The reason that doctors do not achieve perfect results is that their Shen is not focused, their Zhi and Yi are not logical and they cannot take both internal and external into consideration. Ignorance of the counterflow and normal flow of Yin and Yang is the first reason of failure in treating disease.

If one treats diseases before finishing the apprenticeship, regards wrong as right, plagiarizes others' achievements and uses stone needles indiscriminately, the person will surely make mistakes. This is the second reason of failure in treating diseases.

If one is unclear about the living conditions of the poor, rich, noble and humble and if one is unaware of the living conditions and of a suitable diet, he or she will fail to make the correct judgment. This is the third reason of failure in treating diseases.

If one simply feels the pulse without enquiring about the onset of the disease, the patient's emotions, diet and intemperance in daily life, how can he or she make a proper diagnosis? This is the fourth reason of failure in treating diseases.

Some doctors today do not know pulse diagnosis. In diagnosing, they do not take human affairs into consideration.²

There are many interesting aspects to these two passages, which I will list here.

1. The first is the importance of enquiring about the lifestyle and social position of the patient. Interestingly, the passages explain how disease may be caused by a change in social standing from rich to poor.
2. Both passages emphasize the influence of the emotional state on the aetiology of diseases.
3. Both passages stress the importance of pulse diagnosis.
4. Notice the overlapping of medicine and Confucian ethics: 'if one treats diseases before finishing their apprenticeship, regards wrong as right, plagiarizes others' achievements'.
5. Both passages stress the importance of focusing the three aspects of the brain, that is, the Shen (of the Heart), the Yi (of the Spleen) and the Zhi (of the Kidneys).

2. NATURE OF 'SYMPTOMS' IN CHINESE MEDICINE

Diagnosis by interrogation is based on the fundamental principle that symptoms and signs reflect the condition of the Internal Organs and channels. The concept of symptoms and signs in Chinese medicine is broader than in Western medicine. Whilst Western medicine mostly takes into account symptoms and signs as subjective and objective manifestations of a disease, Chinese medicine takes into account many different manifestations as parts of a whole picture, many of them not related to an actual disease process. Chinese medicine uses not only symptoms and signs as such but many other manifestations to form a picture of the disharmony present in a particular person. Thus, the interrogation

extends well beyond the symptoms and signs pertaining to the presenting complaint.

For example, if a patient presents with epigastric pain as the chief complaint, a Western doctor would enquire about the symptoms strictly relevant to that complaint; for example, is the pain better or worse after eating, does the pain come immediately after eating or two hours later, is there regurgitation of food, etc.

A Chinese doctor would ask similar questions but many others, too, such as *'Are you thirsty?'*, *'Do you have a bitter taste in your mouth?'*, *'Do you feel tired?'*, etc. Many of the so-called symptoms and signs of Chinese medicine would not be considered such in Western medicine. For example, absence of thirst (which confirms a Cold condition), incapacity of making decisions (which points to a deficiency of the Gall-Bladder), a dislike of speaking (which indicates a deficiency of the Lungs), a propensity to outbursts of anger (which confirms the rising of Liver-Yang or Liver-Fire), a desire to lie down (which indicates a weakness of the Spleen), a dull appearance of the eyes (which points to a disturbance of the mind and emotional problems), a deep midline crack on the tongue (which is a sign of propensity to deep emotional problems), and so on. Whenever I refer to 'symptoms and signs' (which I shall also call 'clinical manifestations'), it will be in this context.

a) Tongue and pulse

It is important to stress that the tongue and the pulse are signs that may determine a diagnosis, even in the complete absence of symptoms. In other words, a Slippery pulse is as much a sign of Phlegm as expectoration of sputum and a persistently Weak pulse on the Kidney position is as much a sign of Kidney deficiency as other symptoms.

For example, a young woman may have a persistently Weak Kidney pulse without any symptoms of Kidney deficiency; the Weak Kidney pulse is as much a symptom of Kidney deficiency as backache, dizziness and tinnitus, and we can therefore safely assume this patient suffers from a Kidney deficiency. However, a particular pulse position may become Weak only temporarily through various lifestyle influences and we can reach a diagnostic conclusion only when the pulse has a particular quality consistently over a period of a few weeks or more.

Thus, it should be stressed that the pulse is not only a clinical manifestation used to *confirm* our diagnosis but the pulse by itself is a clinical manifestation that

may point to a particular pattern. For example, whatever the other symptoms and signs, a Slippery pulse indicates Phlegm, a Weak Kidney pulse indicates Kidney deficiency, an Overflowing Heart pulse indicates a Heart pattern, etc.

The same applies to tongue signs which may appear in the absence of symptoms. For example, a Swollen tongue with a sticky coating indicates Phlegm even in the absence of other symptoms of Phlegm. In other words, such a tongue is as much a sign of Phlegm as expectoration of sputum.



Remember: The tongue or pulse *alone* is enough to confirm the presence of a pattern of disharmony.

3. THE ART OF INTERROGATION: ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Diagnosis by interrogation is of course extremely important as, in the process of identifying a pattern, not all the information is given by the patient. Indeed, even if it were, it would still need to be organized in order to identify the pattern or patterns. Sometimes the absence of a certain symptom or sign is diagnostically determinant, and patients, of course, would not report symptoms they do not experience. For example, in distinguishing between a Heat and a Cold pattern, it is necessary to establish whether a person is thirsty or not, and the absence of thirst would point to a Cold pattern. The patient would obviously not volunteer the information of 'not being thirsty'.

The art of diagnosis by interrogation consists in asking relevant questions in relation to a specific patient and a specific condition. A certain pattern may be diagnosed only when the 'right' questions are asked; if we are not aware of a specific pattern and do not ask relevant questions, we will never arrive at a correct diagnosis. For example, if we do not know the existence of the pattern of rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel, we will obviously not ask the questions which might lead us to diagnose such pattern (see below).

The interrogation should not consist of blindly following the traditional list of questions; it should be conducted, following a 'lead', with our asking a series of questions to confirm or exclude a pattern, or patterns, of disharmony that comes to our mind during the exchange of question and response. Therefore, when we ask the patient a question, we should always ask

ourselves *why* we are asking that question. During an interrogation, we should be constantly shifting or reviewing our hypotheses about the possible patterns of disharmony, trying to confirm or exclude certain patterns by asking the right questions.

For example, a patient may present with chronic headaches, and even at this very early stage, we are already making a hypothesis about the possible pattern of disharmony on the basis of our experience and our knowledge; that is, we are thinking of Liver-Yang rising because we know it is by far the most common cause of chronic headaches. We therefore ask questions about the character and location of the pain: if the patient says that the pain is throbbing and is located on the temples, even these few details would almost certainly confirm the diagnosis of Liver-Yang rising.

However, we should never stop there and reach premature conclusions. Instead, we should ask further questions to confirm or exclude the existence of other patterns which also cause headaches. For example, Phlegm is another common cause of chronic headaches and we therefore ask this patient first about other characteristics of the headaches, which may confirm Phlegm, and also about possible symptoms of Phlegm in other parts of the body: does the patient experience a feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) in the head, and is the headache sometimes dull and accompanied by a feeling of heaviness? If the answer to these questions is affirmative, we conclude that Phlegm might be a further cause of the headaches. We then ask other questions related to Phlegm in other parts of the body; in this particular case, we might ask whether the patient occasionally expectorates sputum or sometimes experiences a feeling of oppression in the chest (Fig. 28.2).

Another example of the importance of asking the right questions to confirm or exclude our hypothesis

about the pattern or patterns of disharmony is rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel. Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel may cause a wide range of symptoms affecting the whole torso. These may include lower abdominal fullness and pain, painful periods, umbilical fullness and pain, epigastric fullness and pain, a feeling of energy rising in the abdomen, a feeling of tightness of the chest, slight breathlessness, palpitations, a feeling of a lump in the throat, a feeling of heat in the face and anxiety (of course not all these symptoms need to be present).

It may well be that the patient reports only the symptoms of painful periods and a feeling of a lump in the throat; if we are not familiar with the pattern of rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel, we may not ask the right questions to uncover other related symptoms and we may therefore attribute painful periods to Cold in the Uterus (for example) and the feeling of a lump in the throat to stagnation of Liver-Qi. Even should we uncover other symptoms mentioned above, if we are not familiar with the pattern of rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel, we may wrongly attribute the above symptoms to a confusing number of patterns involving many organs instead of seeing that they are connected with the pattern of rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel (Fig. 28.3).

4. TERMINOLOGY PROBLEMS IN INTERROGATION

A potential problem for practitioners in the West is that the interrogation and the various expressions used to express symptoms are derived from Chinese experiences and culture and a Western patient would not necessarily use the same expressions. This is a problem, however, that can be overcome with experience. After some years of practice, we can learn to translate the Chinese way of expressing symptoms and find correlations more common to Western patients. For example, whereas a Chinese man might spontaneously say that he has a 'distending pain', an English-speaking Western patient might say that he feels 'bloated' or 'bursting'. The words are different, but the symptom they describe is the same. With practice and acute observation we gradually build up a 'vocabulary' of symptoms as described by Western patients. For example, I have come to interpret the peculiar English expression 'a feeling of butterflies in the stomach' as a symptom of rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel.

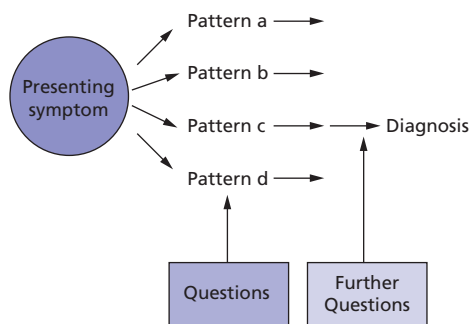


Figure 28.2. Asking the right questions.

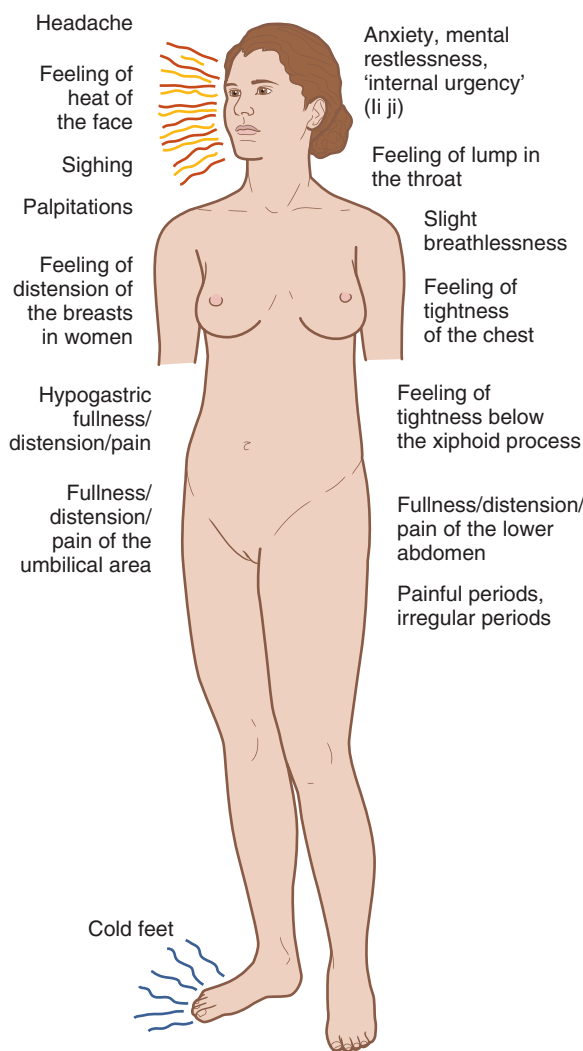


Figure 28.3. Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel.

The translation from Chinese of the terms related to certain symptoms also may present some problems. The traditional terms are rich with meaning and sometimes very poetic and are more or less impossible to translate properly because Western language cannot convey all the nuances intrinsic in a Chinese character. For example, I translate the word *men* as a 'feeling of oppression'; an analysis of the Chinese character, however, which portrays a heart squashed by a door, conveys the feeling of oppression in a rich, metaphorical way. What cannot be adequately translated is the cultural use of this term in China often to imply that the person is rather 'depressed' (as we intend this term in the West) from emotional problems. As Chinese patients seldom admit

openly to being 'depressed', they will often say they experience a feeling of *men* in the chest.

Another example is the term *xin fan*, which I translate as 'mental restlessness'. The Chinese characters contain the radical for 'heart', indicating an emotional cause of this feeling, and the radical for 'fire', indicating the heating effect of emotional stress on the internal organ; the translation cannot possibly do justice to the Chinese term and convey its rich inner meaning.

Yet another interesting example is the use of the word *ku* to describe certain symptoms: *ku* means 'bitter' and is sometimes used to indicate a pain's severity. However, the word *ku* – that is, 'bitter' – in China also has a definite emotional connotation implying that the person has had a 'bitter' life and bitter life experiences.

We should not, however, overemphasize the terminology problems due to cultural differences between China and the West. Quite frequently, Western patients report symptoms exactly as they are in Chinese books. For example, a patient recently told me quite spontaneously '*I am often thirsty but I do not feel like drinking*'.



CLINICAL NOTE

I once asked Dr Shen, a Chinese doctor from Shanghai who, in the second half of his life, practised in the United States, whether he found that Western patients were very different from Chinese ones. He replied: 'Not really, people eat in the West and eat in China, have emotions in the West and in China, work in the West and in China, have sex in the West and in China.'

5. PATIENTS' EXPRESSIONS

It is only after the patient has finished relating the main problems that we can start asking questions systematically on the basis of the '10 questions' but always following the lead given by what the patient has told us. Often he or she has a good insight as to the main problem in his or her life: often this is the first 'problem' reported. For example, when asked about what the main problem was, a 48-year-old man said that he was *at a cross-roads in his life*, that he *felt dissatisfied with his work* and that he *was searching for something more meaningful in his life*. This is a good example of how a patient spontaneously volunteers information about his existential doubts which are obviously at the root of his physical problems. Of course, it is not always like this: very many patients cannot see or do not want to see the existential and spiritual problems in their life and present with a long

list of physical symptoms which hide the true root of their existential *dis-ease*.

At the beginning of the interrogation, it is important to let patients speak freely and to make a note of the actual expressions they use; these are usually quite suggestive and indicative of a patient's problem and sometimes also of the aetiology. For example, if a patient describes feeling 'impotent' about a certain situation, it conveys the idea that the patient feels frustrated (and, in the case of a man, it also may indicate sexual impotence). It is particularly important to make a note of the actual expression used by a patient, especially when this is repeated in the course of the interrogation. For example, a patient may use the expression 'trapped' two or three times, clearly indicating that emotional frustration may be at the root of the problem.

In some cases patients refer to a particular part of the body several times in the course of the interrogation, and this gives a strong indication of the possible pattern involved. For example, a patient suffering from chronic mental-emotional problems may refer to the 'throat' three or four times during the course of the interrogation, saying things such as, 'I feel a lump in the throat when I'm upset', 'My throat often feels dry', or 'I feel my heart in my throat'; this may suggest a condition of Qi stagnation in the Liver or Lungs.

The practice of Chinese medicine in the West presents us with new challenges which Chinese practitioners do not have in China. Western patients often seek treatment in search of an existential and spiritual balance, which is not the case in China. We therefore need to adapt our diagnosis and treatment to the needs of Western patients. For example, a woman said that she sought treatment because she wanted 'more integration, rhythm and earthedness in her life'. We therefore need to develop a new knowledge of patterns and diagnosis which allows us to interpret the needs of our patients as they report them. In this particular example, I interpreted this patient's lack of 'earthedness' as being due to a severe Kidney deficiency which made her feel 'without root' (it would have been a mistake to interpret her word 'earthedness' in a literal sense as necessarily pointing to a deficiency in the Earth element).

6. PITFALLS TO AVOID IN INTERROGATION

The specific interrogation (as defined above), based on questions that concern the patient's clinical

manifestations, is aimed at finding the *pattern* of disharmony; the general interrogation (about the patient's lifestyle, family situation, emotional environment, living conditions, etc.) is aimed at finding the cause of disease. It would be wrong to confuse the two and to deduce the *pattern* of disharmony from the enquiry about the patient's lifestyle, work and family life. I have noticed this occurring in practice many times when a student or practitioner brings a patient to me for a second opinion. I frequently hear comments such as 'Andrew is under a lot of stress at work, and he **therefore** suffers from Liver-Qi stagnation.' This is an example of how a practitioner may confuse the general enquiry about the patient's life to find the *cause* of the disease with the specific enquiry about clinical manifestations to find the *pattern* of disharmony. In other words, to go back to the above example, it would be totally wrong to *assume* that Andrew suffers from Liver-Qi stagnation on the basis of an enquiry about his lifestyle, work, etc.; such a diagnosis can be made only on the basis of a specific enquiry about his clinical manifestations. The patient might well have a lot of stress in his or her life, but this does not necessarily cause Liver-Qi stagnation as emotional strain may cause many other patterns.

Another possible pitfall is to make a diagnosis of a pattern of disharmony on the basis of vague and woolly concepts deduced from observation of the patient's lifestyle; for example, 'Betty seems to be a very "woody" person, so I thought there was Liver-Qi stagnation.' Of course, a diagnosis of a person's prevailing Element on the basis of the body shape, mannerism, gait and voice is important (see [Chapter 1](#)), but this does not always coincide with the prevailing pattern: in other words, a Wood-type person will not necessarily suffer from a Liver pattern of disharmony.

A word of caution is called for about conducting the interrogation. As mentioned above, the interrogation is conducted with close reference to pattern identification and the questions are aimed at confirming or excluding the existence of a certain pattern of disharmony in the patient.

The diagnostic process starts with observation skills as soon as a patient walks in; for example, if a female patient looks pale, talks with a low voice and complains of tiredness and poor appetite, we immediately think of Spleen-Qi deficiency as a possible pattern. Thus, further questions aim to confirm or disprove the existence of this pattern. In Chinese medicine, however, it is easy to conduct the interrogation in a way that might influence

the patient and elicit the symptoms that will force the clinical manifestations into a preconceived pattern; this is a real danger of Chinese diagnosis. The only way to eliminate this danger is to keep an *open mind*; this is extremely important. Going back to the above example, we must at all times be prepared to contemplate the real possibility that this patient might *not* suffer from Spleen-Qi deficiency or that Spleen-Qi deficiency might not be the only or even the main pattern or problem.

PITFALLS IN INTERROGATION

- Do not use information about the patient's lifestyle to deduce the *pattern* of disharmony (you may deduce the *cause* of disease from it).
- Do not rely exclusively on a patient's Element type to diagnose a pattern of disharmony.
- Remember to keep an open mind when diagnosing the patterns of disharmony.

7. PROCEDURE FOR INTERROGATION

The interrogation generally follows on from the observation of the patient's facial colour, body shape and body movement and hearing the patient's voice and other sounds; thus observation precedes interrogation. As soon as the patient comes in, the diagnostic process has already started: we observe the movement of the patient (e.g. whether slow or quick), the complexion, the body shape (to assess it in terms of Five Elements), the sound of the voice and any smell emanating from the patient. Diagnosis has already started as we observe all these factors. We may, for example, diagnose the Element type (Chapter 1) and whether the patient has a Full or Empty condition. If the former, the patient has a loud voice, walks rapidly and has a strong handshake; if the latter, the patient has a weak voice, walks slowly and has a weak handshake.

I usually start the interrogation by asking the patient about the main problems that bring him or her to me. I let the patient speak freely first, without interrupting. I always make a note of any peculiar expressions the patient might use. As indicated above, Western patients will obviously use expressions different from those used by Chinese patients. I never discount a patient's turn of phrase as it can usually be interpreted in terms of Chinese diagnosis.

Examples of peculiar descriptions of symptoms from my practice with English patients might include 'a feeling of butterflies in the stomach', a 'feeling as if the stomach is having an argument with itself', etc. As the patient is describing the main problem or problems, I am already thinking of various patterns of disharmony that might be causing it or them, and I therefore start asking questions to confirm or exclude the particular pattern of disharmony I had in mind.

After the patient has finished reporting the main problems for which he or she is seeking help, and after I have broadly decided on the patterns of disharmony involved, I then proceed to ask more questions, generally following either the traditional 10 questions or the 16 questions that are indicated below. This is done for two reasons: first, because the answers to these further questions may confirm the patterns of disharmony diagnosed and, second, because they may bring up other problems which the patient has overlooked.

I generally look at the tongue and feel the pulse towards the end of the interrogation again to further confirm the patterns of disharmony. However, it is important to note that the tongue and pulse are not simply used to confirm the diagnosis of a pattern of disharmony; very often they clearly show the existence of other patterns which were not evident from the symptoms and signs. In this case, we should never discount the findings of the tongue and pulse but we should always ask further questions to confirm the patterns of disharmony shown by the tongue and pulse. Even if there are no further symptoms, we can still rely on the tongue and pulse signs as the basis to diagnose a certain pattern of disharmony. For example, a patient may come to us complaining of dizziness, and, on the basis of symptoms and signs, we diagnose that the prevailing pattern causing the dizziness is that of Phlegm. When we then observe the tongue, we find that the tongue, besides being Swollen (indicating Phlegm) is also clearly Purple: this is a definite sign of Blood stasis even if the patient has no symptoms of it.

In a few cases, the tongue and pulse may show conditions that are actually opposite to that indicated by the patterns of disharmony. For example, a person may suffer from a very clear Yang deficiency and the pulse is Rapid or, vice versa, the person has clear symptoms and signs of Heat but the pulse is Slow. We should never discount these contradictory signs and should always try to find their cause.

8. TIMESCALE OF SYMPTOMS

After this step, I would continue asking other questions, broadly following the 16 questions discussed below to determine whether there are other symptoms and signs the patient might have forgotten about. This is always followed by asking about history of any other diseases or surgery.

When asking about various problems the patient has or has had, it is important to establish the exact time of onset. It is my experience that patients nearly always underestimate the length of time they have suffered from a particular problem. Therefore if, when asked how long he or she has had a particular problem, a patient says ‘*I cannot remember exactly, probably 5–7 years*’, we can be almost certain that the onset was at the higher point of the range offered by the patient, that is, 7 years or more.

Establishing the time of onset of a problem accurately is important in many cases because it may establish a causality that neither the patient nor the doctor or consultant has observed; this happens frequently in practice. Examples of events (besides the traditional causes of disease, e.g. emotional problems, diet, etc.) that may be the unrecognized trigger of a particular problem are:

- an operation
- an accident
- an immunization
- the menarche
- the menopause
- childbirth

TRIGGER EVENTS IN PATIENTS’ LIVES

- An operation
- An accident
- An immunization
- The menarche
- The menopause
- Childbirth

For example, a patient may develop abdominal pain after an abdominal operation from adhesions; someone may develop backache and neck ache after an accident which had been forgotten; chronic fatigue syndrome may develop after a series of immunizations prior to travel abroad; young girls suffering from migraine may have forgotten that the onset coincided with the menarche

(this has important repercussions on the diagnosis and treatment); a change in the emotional state may be related to the onset of the menopause; asthma or migraine may start after childbirth.

9. INTEGRATION OF INTERROGATION WITH OBSERVATION

The interrogation should be integrated seamlessly with observation. All the time while the patient is talking we should observe the facial complexion, the eyes and other features; this is important not only for the observation itself but also to observe any changes that take place during the interrogation. For example, frequently women develop a light, red rash on the neck as they relate their symptoms; I interpret this as a sign of Liver-Heat and one that often reflects the emotional origin of a problem.

Another possible change that should be observed during the interrogation is a change in the tone and pitch of voice. If the voice becomes weaker and sounds sad, it indicates that sadness or grief is at the root of the problem, in particular of the specific problem being related. For example, if a woman’s voice becomes weak and sad as she reports that her periods have stopped, it may indicate that sadness or grief affecting the Lungs and Heart is the root of this particular problem. Conversely, if the voice becomes stronger and assumes a higher pitch as the patient relates a particular problem, it may indicate that that problem is due to anger or repressed anger. Often a patient may try to hide a particular emotion, for example, by laughing inappropriately during the interrogation; the hidden emotion is often sadness or grief, especially in societies in which expression of one’s feelings is somewhat discouraged.

10. IDENTIFICATION OF PATTERNS AND INTERROGATION

After the patient has finished describing the main problem or problems, we start asking questions to organize the presenting symptoms and signs into patterns. While we ask questions, we still observe the complexion, eyes, shape of facial features, sound of voice, smells, etc., to be integrated with the findings from the interrogation. Once we are reasonably confident in having identified the pattern or patterns involved, we often must continue the interrogation to *exclude* or confirm the presence of other patterns that may stem from the existing ones. For example, if there is Liver-Blood

deficiency, I would always check whether there is Heart-Blood deficiency (especially if the observation leads me to believe this); if there is a Liver deficiency, in women especially, I would always check whether there is a Kidney deficiency; if there is Liver-Qi stagnation, I would check whether this has given rise to some Heat; and if there is a Spleen deficiency, I would check whether there is also a Stomach deficiency, etc.

It is important to remember that the interrogation is aimed not only at finding out the main pattern or patterns of disharmony but often also at *excluding* certain patterns of disharmony: for example, if a woman suffers from amenorrhoea, even though the pattern of Liver-Blood deficiency may be very clear, I would also always ask questions aimed at finding out whether there is also a Kidney deficiency. Another example is that if a patient suffers from Liver-Blood deficiency I would always check whether this has given rise to Heart-Blood deficiency and would therefore ask questions to exclude (or confirm) the presence of this pattern. Table 28.1 lists the correspondence between presenting patterns and patterns to exclude or confirm.

11. TONGUE AND PULSE DIAGNOSIS: INTEGRATION WITH INTERROGATION

Finally, I look at the tongue and feel the pulse: this is done not only to *confirm* the pattern or patterns identified from the interrogation but also to see whether the tongue and pulse indicate the presence of patterns not evident from the clinical manifestations. This occurs frequently in practice and is the real value of tongue and pulse diagnosis; if tongue and pulse diagnosis were used simply to *confirm* a diagnosis, there would be no point in carrying out this step.

Very often the tongue and pulse add valuable information to the findings from interrogation and should never be discounted. For example, a patient may complain of various symptoms and we diagnose Liver-Qi stagnation; if the tongue has a deep Heart crack, this tells us that the patient has a constitutional tendency to Heart patterns and a constitutional tendency to be more affected by emotional problems. The following case history is a good illustration of this.



Remember: The tongue and pulse may indicate the presence of patterns not evident from the clinical manifestations.

Table 28.1 Patterns to exclude or confirm in the presence of presenting patterns

Presenting pattern	Pattern to exclude or confirm
Liver-Qi stagnation	Liver-Blood deficiency
Liver-Qi stagnation	Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat
Liver-Qi stagnation	Liver-Blood stasis
Liver-Blood deficiency	Heart-Blood deficiency (and vice versa)
Liver-Blood deficiency	Liver-Yin deficiency
Liver-Blood deficiency	Kidney deficiency
Liver-Yang rising	Liver-Yin deficiency
Liver-Yang rising	Kidney deficiency
Liver-Yang rising	Liver-Blood deficiency
Liver-Yang rising	Liver-Fire
Liver-Fire	Heart-Fire
Heart-Blood deficiency	Liver-Blood deficiency
Heart-Fire	Liver-Fire
Heart-Yin deficiency	Kidney-Yin deficiency
Spleen-Qi deficiency	Spleen-Yang deficiency
Spleen-Qi deficiency	Stomach-Qi deficiency
Spleen-Qi deficiency	Dampness (and vice versa)
Spleen-Yang deficiency	Kidney-Yang deficiency
Lung-Qi deficiency	Spleen-Qi deficiency
Lung-Yin deficiency	Kidney-Yin deficiency
Kidney-Yang deficiency	Spleen-Yang deficiency
Kidney-Yin deficiency	Liver-, Heart- or Lung-Yin deficiency
Invasion of Wind	Check for symptoms of interior transmission

Case History

A 24-year-old woman complained of chronic aches in her knees, wrists and ankles. She also suffered from chronic tiredness, dizziness and loose stools. Her periods were regular and lasted only 3 days. Apart from this, she had no other symptoms. Her clinical manifestations indicate a deficiency of Blood (tiredness, dizziness, scanty

periods) and a Spleen deficiency (tiredness, loose stools). The joint ache may be due to invasion of Cold and Dampness (she lived in a particularly damp area of the British Isles), but it is also aggravated by the underlying Blood deficiency (Liver-Blood not nourishing the sinews).

However, the pulse and tongue indicated totally different patterns. Her pulse was Overflowing on both Front positions and her tongue was very Red, with a redder tip with red points and a Heart crack. Thus, every sign of the pulse and tongue clearly indicated Heart-Fire; she had not related any symptom that would indicate this apart from thirst (which I asked her about after seeing her tongue and feeling her pulse). I came to the conclusion that she was suffering from severe emotional problems that were probably quite long-standing and deriving from her childhood (due to the Heart crack). The acupuncturist who had been treating her and had referred her to me confirmed this. This is therefore a good example of a case in which the pulse and tongue throw an entirely different light on the diagnosis; for this reason the findings of pulse and tongue diagnosis should never be discarded when they do not fit the symptoms and signs. A further confirmation of the accuracy of the diagnosis based on the pulse and tongue was the patient's reaction to the herbal formula prescribed. I totally ignored the presenting symptoms and, only on the basis of the findings from the pulse and tongue, prescribed a variation of the formula *Gan Mai Da Zao Tang Glycyrrhiza-Triticum-Zizyphus Decoction* (which calms the Mind and nourishes the Heart) with the addition of *Yuan Zhi Radix Polygalae tenuifoliae*, *Shi Chang Pu Rhizoma Acori graminei* and *Long Chi Dens Draconis*, with good results.

Obviously, at some point after treating mostly her emotional state, we should nourish Liver-Blood and tonify Spleen-Qi.

The following case history is another example of the importance of pulse and tongue in diagnosis and how these two factors can point to a completely different set of patterns which would not emerge from a superficial examination of symptoms.

Case History

A 33-year-old woman had been suffering from abdominal distension and pain for 6 years. Her bowel movements were regular, occurring every day. She was under

stress at work. She appeared to be a very confident and balanced young professional woman.

Diagnosis: At first sight, this seems an obvious and simple case of Liver-Qi stagnation deriving from stress at work and probably irregular diet (these two causes of disease often go together). However, her pulse and tongue showed a totally different story. Her tongue was red on the sides with a deep Heart crack and a sticky-yellow coating. Her pulse was Slippery and quite Overflowing on the Heart position. Her eyes lacked lustre.

The deep Heart crack on the tongue clearly indicates deep-seated and long-standing emotional problems that go beyond just stress at work; this was confirmed by the Overflowing quality of the Heart pulse and the lack of lustre of her eyes. Therefore, the tongue and pulse showed a completely different picture than the image she tried to project: she obviously suffered from deep emotional problems, most probably dating back to her childhood or teenage years. I did not think it appropriate to delve into this during the first consultation, but, on asking, she did confirm that she suffered from deep depressions, irregular moods, gloominess, irritability and anxiety.

I treated her with acupuncture, and the treatment principle was to clear Heart-Heat, resolve Phlegm and calm the Mind. I selected the points from the following: Du-24 Shenting, Ren-15 Jiuwei, HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen and ST-40 Fenglong.

Besides giving extremely valuable information for diagnosis, the tongue and pulse are very important also to determine the treatment principle. In fact, they are very important to help us discriminate when a Fullness or Emptiness predominates. For example, in chronic ME (post-viral fatigue syndrome), there is always a combination of Dampness (or Damp-Heat) with Spleen deficiency: it is therefore important to determine whether we should concentrate on tonifying the Spleen or on resolving Dampness. The tongue and pulse are important to help in determining this: if the tongue has a fairly thick coating and the pulse is Slippery, we should probably concentrate on resolving Dampness.

An even more important case is that of cancer. I usually use Chinese medicine as an adjuvant to Western therapies for cancer. Thus, if a patient is undergoing chemotherapy, I would not treat the cancer but would support the body's Qi and the immune system with herbs to tonify Qi, Blood or Yin.

After the end of chemotherapy or after surgery, I assess the tongue and pulse to get an idea of whether the patterns that caused the cancer are still active. In other words, even after surgery to remove a tumour (normally caused by Blood stasis, Phlegm or Toxic Heat, or a combination of these), I assess the situation to determine whether such pathogenic factors are still present and how 'active' they are. The tongue and pulse are important to determine this: if the tongue is Red, with red points and a sticky coating, and the pulse is Rapid and Slippery or Wiry, I assume that, in spite of the surgery, the pathogenic factors are very much active and I therefore administer herbs aimed at expelling such factors, together with anticancer herbs. If, on the other hand, the tongue is not Red and does not have red points or a sticky coating, and the pulse is Weak, Deep and Fine, I dedicate my attention to tonifying the body's Qi and strengthening the immune system.

In conclusion, this is the order I usually follow in my interrogation:

1. Ask about the presenting problem, letting the patient speak freely.

2. Ask specific questions to determine the pattern or patterns causing the presenting problem or problems trying to establish the time of onset accurately.
3. Ask questions to exclude or confirm other patterns.
4. Ask more questions broadly following the 16 questions.
5. Ask about past diseases and operations.
6. Look at the tongue and feel the pulse.
7. Ask about any family illnesses such as asthma, eczema and heart disease.
8. Inquire about the patient's emotional life, family life and working conditions to try to establish the *cause* of the disease.

The following case history and diagram (Fig. 28.4) illustrate the process of interrogation.

Case History (see Fig. 28.4)

A 37-year-old woman is rather thin and pale without 'lustre', she walks slowly and her voice is rather low. As she sits, I notice that her hair is dry and lifeless and that she looks and sounds in rather low spirits. At this point, a first tentative diagnosis is made already, as the thin

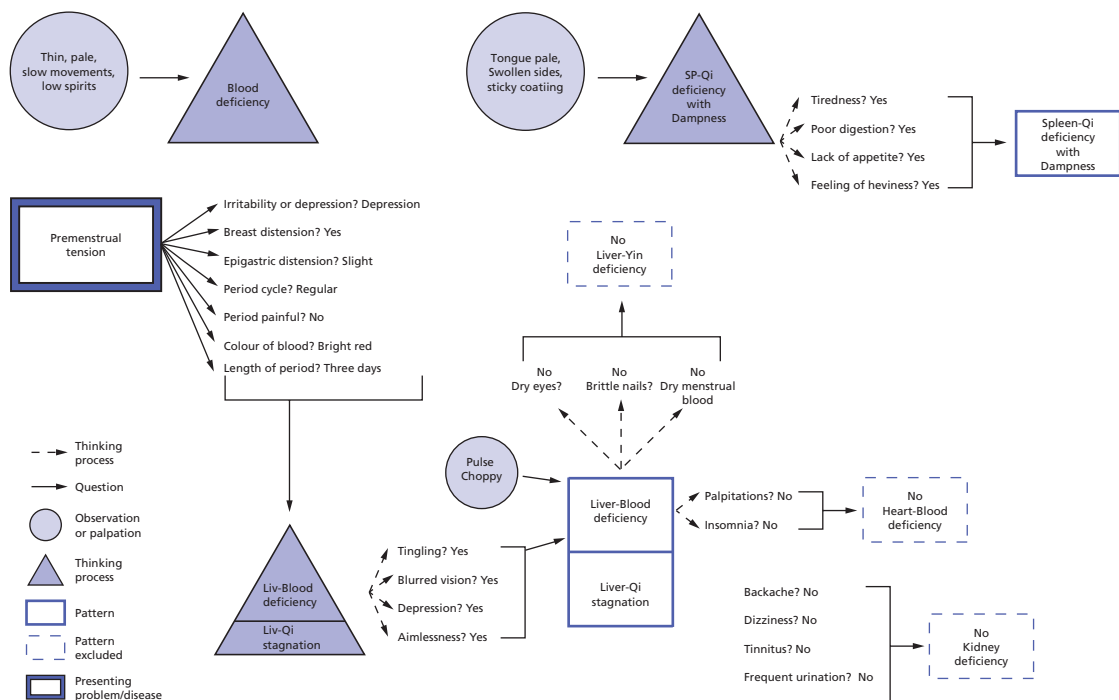


Figure 28.4. Case history process.

body, dull-pale complexion, dry hair and low spirits all point to Blood deficiency (this tentative conclusion is illustrated by a triangle); we know that this is all the more likely, as Blood deficiency is common in women. However, as mentioned above, we must absolutely keep an open mind and be prepared to acknowledge that the patient does not suffer from Blood deficiency: if we do not keep an open mind, there may be the danger that our whole interrogation is biased, 'forcing' the clinical manifestations into the preconceived pattern of Blood deficiency.

As we ask her about her chief complaint, she reports suffering from premenstrual tension, something that does not directly confirm the diagnosis of Blood deficiency. Since the main complaint is premenstrual tension (illustrated by a double-line box), we immediately think of Liver-Qi stagnation first as this is the most common cause of this condition (illustrated by a triangle); however, we also keep in mind that there are other possible causes of premenstrual tension, some Full (such as Phlegm-Fire) and some Empty (such as Liver-Blood deficiency or Kidney deficiency). We therefore start asking questions to confirm or exclude Liver-Qi stagnation. The questions and answers are as follows:

- What are the main manifestations of the premenstrual tension: irritability or depression? She says both, but more depression and crying than irritability. We ask this question to help differentiate a Full (in which irritability predominates) from an Empty (in which depression predominates) condition of premenstrual tension.
 - Is there breast distension? Yes. We ask this question to confirm whether there is Liver-Qi stagnation: a pronounced feeling of distension indicates Liver-Qi stagnation. In this case, there is a feeling of distension but it is not that pronounced.
 - Is there epigastric or abdominal distension? Very little.
 - Is the period cycle regular? Yes. We ask this question to confirm whether there is Liver-Qi stagnation, as a severe Liver-Qi stagnation may make the period irregular.
 - Is the period painful? No, but there is distension. We ask this question because we have ascertained that there is some Liver-Qi stagnation and the next step is to enquire whether this has led to Blood stasis; the absence of menstrual pain tells us that there is no Blood stasis.
 - What colour is the menstrual blood? Bright-red. We ask this question as a further aid to confirm or exclude the presence of Blood stasis: the bright-red colour confirms there is no Blood stasis.
 - How many days does the period last? Three days. This confirms there is Blood deficiency.
- At this point, a further picture is tentatively created in our mind: it seems quite clear now that there is some Liver-Qi stagnation causing the premenstrual tension, but this is not too pronounced and most probably is secondary to the Liver-Blood deficiency (a situation that is very common in women). This conclusion is illustrated by a single-line box. It remains now to check that there are no other patterns; a very common one in this situation would be a Kidney deficiency. We therefore ask the following questions:
- Do you ever suffer from backache? No.
 - Do you ever suffer from dizziness? Yes.
 - Do you ever suffer from tinnitus? No.
 - Is your urination too frequent? No.
 - Do you ever suffer from night-sweating? No.
- The absence of backache, tinnitus, frequent urination and night-sweating indicates the absence of a Kidney deficiency (this is indicated by a dotted box): although there is some dizziness, in the absence of other Kidney symptoms, it must be caused by the Blood deficiency. In order to confirm the diagnosis of Blood deficiency unequivocally, we ask a few more questions about this:
- Do you ever experience some tingling of the limbs? Yes.
 - Do you ever experience blurred vision? Yes, sometimes.
 - Do you ever feel depressed? Yes.
 - Do you ever have a feeling of aimlessness or confusion about what direction to take in life? Yes.
- These four further symptoms confirm the deficiency of Liver-Blood unequivocally: the depression, feeling of aimlessness and confusion about life's direction are due to the deficient 'movement' of the Ethereal Soul caused by Liver-Blood deficiency. Why is this deficiency of Blood of the Liver and not of other organs? The scanty period, dry hair and blurred vision point to Blood deficiency of the Liver. However, we should check whether there might not also be a Blood deficiency of another organ and especially of the Heart. We therefore ask the following questions:
- Do you ever suffer from palpitations? No.
 - Do you suffer from insomnia? No.

The answer to these two questions allows us to exclude the presence of Heart-Blood deficiency (illustrated by a dotted box). Finally, as there is Liver-Blood deficiency, we should check whether this has progressed to Liver-Yin deficiency. We therefore ask the following questions:

- Do you ever suffer from dry eyes? No.
- Dry and brittle nails? No.
- Dry menstrual blood? No.

The negative answer to these three questions tells us there is no Liver-Yin deficiency (illustrated by a dotted box). Thus, we have established that the main problem is a deficiency of Liver-Blood giving rise to a secondary stagnation of Liver-Qi; the fact that the Liver-Qi stagnation is secondary is important for the treatment principle as this means that we should concentrate our attention on nourishing Liver-Blood and only secondarily on moving Liver-Qi.

Before concluding the interrogation, we should ask about any other symptoms to make sure there are no other patterns: we therefore ask about any headache, chest pain, abdominal pain, stools and urine, sleep and sweating; no further symptoms are reported.

It is now time to look at the tongue and feel the pulse. Her tongue is Pale, slightly Swollen, especially on the sides and with a sticky-white coating. Her pulse was Choppy on the left and Weak on the right.

Being Pale, the tongue confirms the Blood deficiency but also shows other patterns that had not emerged from the interrogation: the swelling on the sides indicates Spleen deficiency and the sticky coating indicates Dampness. A Spleen deficiency with some Dampness is one of the most common conditions in practice and it is therefore not surprising to find it reflected on this patient's tongue. Having noticed this on her tongue we must go back to ask more questions to confirm there is a Spleen deficiency with some Dampness. We therefore ask the following:

- Do you feel easily tired? Yes. This tells us that there might be some Spleen deficiency.
- How is your appetite? Poor.
- Do you have any digestive problems? Fullness after eating? A sticky taste? Epigastric pain? The patient reports no epigastric pain but does have some feeling of fullness after eating. This confirms the Dampness.
- Do you ever experience a feeling of heaviness? Yes, slightly. This further confirms the presence of Dampness.

As for the pulse, the Weak quality on the right confirms the Spleen deficiency while the Choppy quality on the left confirms the Blood deficiency.

In conclusion, there is Liver-Blood deficiency, Spleen-Qi deficiency, a secondary stagnation of Liver-Qi and some Dampness: thus, there are two Empty and two Full patterns. The empty character of the pulse is important in guiding us to the right treatment principle, which in this case must be to nourish Liver-Blood and tonify Spleen-Qi primarily and to move Liver-Qi and resolve Dampness secondarily. I adopted the treatment principle of tonifying Spleen-Qi, nourishing Liver-Blood, moving Qi and resolving Dampness.



TREATMENT

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu to tonify Spleen-Qi.
 LIV-8 Ququan, Ren-4 Guanyuan to nourish Liver-Blood.
 SP-9 Yinlingquan to resolve Dampness.
 LIV-3 Taichong to move Liver-Qi.

Xiao Yao San Variation
 Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri*, Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis*, Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis*, Fu Ling *Poria*, Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae*, Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae*, Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi*.

Case History (Fig. 28.5)

A 42-year-old woman complains of benign positional vertigo for the last 20 years. As she comes in, we notice that she is thin, she walks rather slowly, she is quiet, her voice is low and her eyes are slightly dull. These signs derived from observation give us a first impression of her condition, and they clearly point to a deficiency. In addition, the dullness of her eyes indicates that emotional problems may be the cause of her condition. As she sits down, we start asking about her symptoms in greater detail. She says that she has been suffering from infrequent attacks of vertigo for the past 20 years and that these got worse and more frequent after the birth of her second daughter two and a half years ago. The aggravation of the symptoms after childbirth leads us to think of a Kidney deficiency as one of the possible patterns. During the attacks of vertigo, she suffers from very severe dizziness so that the room seems to be spinning around and she vomits; the attacks usually occur in the mornings and are aggravated by lying down and ameliorated by sitting. The severity of the

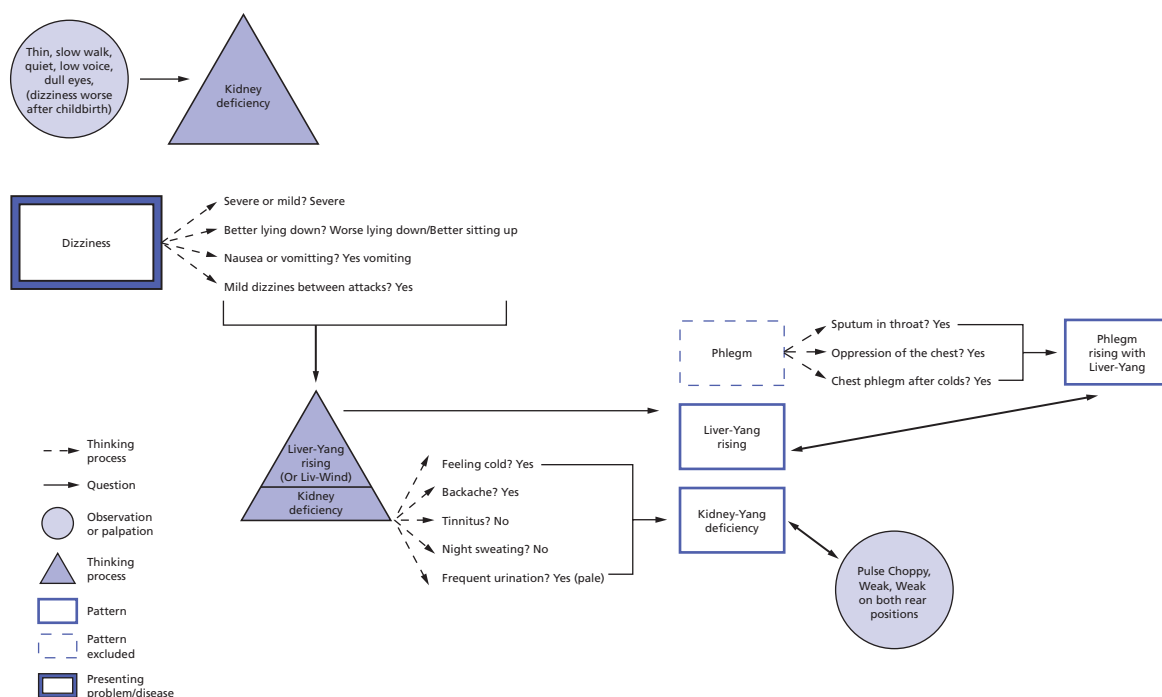


Figure 28.5. Case history process.

vertigo clearly indicates it is due to a Full pattern: therefore, from the few signs and symptoms gleaned from the initial observation and interrogation, we can conclude that there is a mixed condition of Fullness and Emptiness. The severe vertigo could be due to either Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Wind. In between the attacks of severe vertigo she also suffers from bouts of mild dizziness. In contrast to the attacks of severe vertigo, the bouts of mild dizziness must be due to a deficiency, probably of the Kidneys. At this point we have reached some temporary conclusions and we can hypothesize that she suffers from Liver-Yang rising (causing the severe vertigo and possibly vomiting) stemming from a Kidney deficiency (causing the bouts of mild dizziness and also the aggravation of vertigo after childbirth).

We now need to ask about other symptoms, and she reports feeling cold in general and suffering from chilblains in winter. In order to confirm or exclude the pattern of Kidney deficiency we ask about backache, tinnitus, night-sweating and urination: she does suffer from chronic lower backache and frequent urination with pale urine. Considering the general cold feeling, the backache, the frequent urination, the bouts of mild dizziness and the aggravation after childbirth, we can

diagnose the pattern of Kidney-Yang deficiency. We can also deduce that the Kidney deficiency is the underlying condition for the rising of Liver-Yang.

We then ask about her periods, an essential question in all women, and she reports no problems in this area: the periods come regularly, they are not too heavy or too scanty and not painful.

As we know that Phlegm is a frequent cause of dizziness and vertigo, we need to ask questions to confirm or exclude the possibility of the interaction of Phlegm and Liver-Yang rising as a cause of her vertigo. Her body shape does not point to Phlegm as she is thin (Phlegm tends to cause obesity); however, that is not to say that thin people never suffer from Phlegm. We ask her whether she suffers from catarrh, and she says she often has to clear her throat in the morning, and, if she gets a cold, it frequently goes to her chest and produces a lot of sputum. She also occasionally suffers from a feeling of oppression of the chest: these symptoms together with the vomiting during the attacks of vertigo point to Phlegm as a concurrent cause of vertigo.

Her tongue has Red sides, and apart from that it is fairly normal: the tongue therefore does not show any

signs of Phlegm as it is not Swollen and does not have a sticky coating. This does not mean there is no Phlegm but simply that Phlegm is an accompanying pattern and a further cause of the vertigo secondary to Liver-Yang rising. Her pulse is Weak in general, Choppy and Weak on the left and especially Weak on both the Rear positions. The pulse therefore clearly shows only the deficiency patterns of her condition, that is, Kidney-Yang deficiency and Spleen-Qi deficiency, which is at the root of Phlegm. This is a clear example of a case in which the pulse and tongue show different aspects of the condition: the pulse shows the underlying deficiency condition while the tongue shows Liver-Yang rising. We should not expect the pulse and the tongue always to accord with each other (in this case, we might have expected a Wiry pulse to accord with the Red sides of the tongue) as they often show different aspects of a complex condition.

In conclusion, there are two deficiency patterns, Kidney-Yang deficiency and Spleen-Qi deficiency (which are the Root), and two full patterns, Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm (which are the Manifestation). As far as the severe vertigo is concerned, Liver-Yang rising is primary in relation to Phlegm. The treatment principle in this case would therefore be to treat both the Root and the Manifestation by simultaneously tonifying Kidney-Yang, tonifying Spleen-Qi, subduing Liver-Yang and resolving Phlegm. In this case we treat the Root and the Manifestation simultaneously because the attacks of vertigo are relatively infrequent, coming about every 6 months: had the attacks of vertigo been much more frequent, we should have concentrated on treating the manifestation, i.e. subduing Liver-Yang and resolving Phlegm.



TREATMENT

Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi, BL-23 Shenshu to tonify the Kidneys.

BL-20 Pishu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli to tonify Spleen-Qi.

LIV-3 Taichong to subdue Liver-Yang.
ST-40 Fenglong to resolve Phlegm.

12. THE 10 TRADITIONAL QUESTIONS

The interrogation is traditionally carried out on the basis of 10 questions. This practice was started by Zhang Jing Yue (1563–1640), but the 10 questions used by

subsequent doctors differed slightly from those found in Dr Zhang's book. The 10 questions proposed by Zhang Jing Yue were as follows:

1. Aversion to cold and fever
2. Sweating
3. Head and body
4. The two excretions
5. Food and drink
6. Chest and abdomen
7. Deafness
8. Thirst
9. Previous illnesses
10. Causes of disease

Besides these questions, Zhang Jing Yue adds two more, one regarding women's gynaecological history and the other regarding children, which makes a total of 12 questions.

Although these are usually referred to in Chinese books as 'questions', they rather represent areas of questioning. These varied a lot over the centuries, as different doctors placed the emphasis on different questions.

The most commonly used areas of questioning mentioned in modern Chinese books are the following 10:

1. Aversion to cold and fever
2. Sweating
3. Head and body
4. Chest and abdomen
5. Food and taste
6. Stools and urine
7. Sleep
8. Hearing and tinnitus
9. Thirst and drink
10. Pain

Two areas of questioning are added for women and children, making a total of 12. It must be stressed that not all these questions need be asked in every situation, nor are these the only possible questions since each situation requires an individual approach and other questions may be relevant.

a) Limitations of the 10 traditional questions

One need not necessarily follow the above order of questioning. In fact, I personally never do because the above order is strongly biased towards an interrogation of a patient suffering from an acute, exterior condition, hence the prominent place afforded to the question about

'aversion to cold and fever', which in Chinese books always comes first. In interior conditions, I do ask about sensation of heat or cold to establish or confirm whether there is internal Cold or internal Heat, but usually towards the end of the interrogation.

There is no reason why we should limit our interrogation rigidly to the traditional 10 questions, nor is there any reason why we should ask all those questions. Each patient is different, with different causes of disease and different patterns of disharmony, and we need to adapt our questions to each patient's unique situation. Moreover, we need to respond to a patient's mental state during an interrogation with sensitivity and flexibility to put a patient at ease, especially during the first consultation. It would be wrong, therefore, to ask the 10 questions routinely without adapting one's approach to the concrete situation. For example, it might well be that a patient bursts into tears as soon as he or she describes his or her main problem, and we should react to this situation in a sensitive and sympathetic manner.

The 10 questions, as the basis of the interrogation in Chinese diagnosis, were formulated during the early Qing dynasty in China, thus at a time and in a culture very different than ours. We should therefore not hesitate in changing the structure and contents of our interrogation to make it more suitable to our time and culture.

I would therefore add the following to the traditional 10 questions:

- Emotions
- Sexual symptoms
- Energy levels

In addition, I introduce a separate area of questioning concerning the limbs, which traditionally is included under 'Body'.



The prominent place of 'aversion to cold and fever' among the 10 questions reflects the huge influence of the *Shang Han Lun* by Zhang Zhong Jing in the history of Chinese medicine. This classic, written around 220 AD, became a veritable bible of Chinese medicine, and no doctor could deviate from it. As the classic is about diseases from external Cold, the question about aversion to cold and fever is very important. In our clinical situation, we do not need to attach the same importance to that question and we only need to ask it when we see a patient suffering from an acute invasion of Wind.

b) Questions on emotional state

An enquiry on the emotional life of the patient plays a role both in the general enquiry to find the *cause* of the

disharmony and in the specific enquiry to find the *pattern* of disharmony. A prevailing emotional state is a clinical manifestation just as any other, and it is therefore an important part of the pattern of disharmony. For example, a propensity to anger is a strong indication of Liver-Yang or Liver-Fire rising, sadness often indicates a Lung deficiency, obsessive thinking points to a Spleen pattern, etc.

It may be that, for cultural reasons, there is no specific question regarding the emotional state of the patient among the traditional 10 questions: Chinese patients tend not to talk about their emotions and often express them as physical symptoms as a kind of agreed 'code' between patient and doctor. I list a few examples of the emotional meaning of various symptoms expressed by Chinese patients below:

1. 'Feeling of oppression of chest' (*xiong men*) often means that the patient is depressed.
2. 'Intense thirst' often indicates the patient is angry.
3. 'Tiredness and dizziness' often means the patient is depressed.
4. 'Lack of appetite' often means the patient is depressed or experiences sexual frustration (the same emotions in a Western patient would be more likely to induce him or her to eat more and 'pick' all the time).
5. 'Insomnia and palpitations' may indicate intense anxiety and fear.
6. 'Bitter pain' may indicate bitter experiences in the patient's life or a state of being embittered.
7. 'Nausea' may indicate that the patient is worried or frustrated or depressed.

c) Questions about sexual life

Modern Chinese doctors never ask about sexual symptoms due to the modern Chinese prudery in sexual matters. However, this should always form part of the interrogation as it provides further information on the symptomatology of the patient to arrive at a pattern of disharmony.

d) Questions on energy levels

An enquiry about energy levels is extremely important as it gives a very simple clue to the presence of a possible Deficiency pattern (excluding the few cases when a person may feel tired from Excess conditions). This question is all the more important since lack of energy is probably one of the main reasons for

Western people to consult a practitioner of Chinese medicine.

13. THE 16 QUESTIONS

Bearing in mind the three new questions on the emotional state, sexual symptoms and energy levels and a different order of questioning, I would therefore propose to revise the traditional 10 questions, making a total of 16 questions, as follows:

1. Pain
2. Food and taste
3. Stools and urine
4. Thirst and drink
5. Energy levels
6. Head, face and body
7. Chest and abdomen
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11. Ears and eyes
12. Feeling of cold, feeling of heat and fever
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14. Sexual symptoms
15. Women's symptoms
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Apart from adding four questions (on pain, emotional state, sexual symptoms and energy levels), I have changed the order of the traditional 10 questions in accordance with my clinical experience with Western patients and have split some questions into two (e.g. 'Food and Drink' into 'Food and Taste' and 'Thirst and Drink').

I have relegated the questions about aversion to cold and fever to the twelfth place because they are usually asked towards the end of the interrogation to confirm the Hot or Cold nature of a particular pattern. The prominent place afforded to aversion to cold or fever in the traditional 10 questions is due to historical reasons: in fact, in the times when the traditional 10 questions were formulated, febrile diseases were extremely common in China and would have formed the major part of a doctor's practice.

I have placed the questions on pain in the first place in the revised 16 questions because that is by far the most common problem that Western patients present in a modern practice. The question on pain is followed by those about food, bowels, urination and thirst, again because these questions cover a very large area of digestive and urinary problems in the

patients we see. The order in which the questions are listed is not necessarily that in which they are asked; for example, in women, the questions about their gynaecological system would be asked fairly early in the interrogation.

The discussion that follows will often list the clinical significance of a given symptom, for example 'night-sweating indicates Yin deficiency' or 'thirst indicates Heat'. It should be pointed out that this approach actually contradicts the very essence of Chinese diagnosis and patterns, according to which it is the *picture* formed by a number of symptoms and signs, rather than individual symptoms, that matters. No symptom or sign can be seen in isolation from the pattern of which it forms a part: it is the landscape that counts, not individual features. Thus, it is wrong to say 'night-sweating indicates Yin deficiency'; we should say 'in the presence of malar flush, a Red tongue without coating and a dry throat at night, night-sweating indicates Yin deficiency while in the presence of a feeling of heaviness, a sticky taste, a bitter taste, epigastric fullness, night-sweating indicates Damp-Heat'. It is only for didactic purposes that we need to list symptoms and signs in isolation with their possible diagnostic significance.

However, after years of practice, in some cases one can deduce the pattern even from an isolated symptom or sign; this is possible because each symptom or sign within a pattern bears within it the 'imprint' of the whole pattern. This can be deduced mostly from observation or hearing/smelling. For example, 'mental restlessness' may be due to Full or Empty Heat, as indicated above, and the diagnosis should be made on the basis of accompanying symptoms. However, an experienced practitioner is able to simply observe the patient and form an idea of whether the 'mental restlessness' derives from Full or Empty Heat. It is difficult to describe how this is done, but mental restlessness from Full Heat manifests with more agitation, it is more 'solid' and the patient is more restless; when mental restlessness is due to Empty Heat, the patient is restless but in a quieter way, there is a vague feeling of anxiety without knowing why and the patient generally looks more deficient.

Another example would be that of cough, in this case using diagnosis from hearing. Simply by hearing the patient cough, an experienced practitioner can deduce not only whether the cough occurs within a pattern of Phlegm or Dryness, but even if it is Cold-Phlegm, Damp-Phlegm or Phlegm-Heat.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- That general and specific interrogation reveal the cause of disease and pattern of disharmony, respectively.
- That the depth of interrogation helps pinpoint the pattern.
- That the tongue and pulse presentation alone may indicate the pathology.
- The importance of asking the right questions and of listening to patients' expressions.
- The avoidable pitfalls and the recommended procedure.
- The integration of interrogation with observation and tongue and pulse diagnosis.
- The adaptation of the 10 traditional questions to fit with the individual Western patient in modern practice.

END NOTES

1. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine-Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 553.
2. Ibid, p. 558.

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Pain

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In this chapter I will discuss pain and its diagnostic points in general: pain in various areas of the body is discussed under the relevant questions; for example, the diagnosis of chest pain will be found under the question related to 'Chest and abdomen'.

WHY we ask

We need to ask about pain because the character, location and timing of pain give a clear indication of the Full or Empty character of the condition and they also clearly indicate various pathogenic factors such as Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Dampness, etc.

Obviously, another reason for asking about pain is that it is a very common complaint and often the one that leads our patients to seek help.

WHEN we ask

Obviously we need to ask about pain in great detail when this is the chief complaint. However, even if the patient comes to us for a condition that does not involve pain, such as asthma, we should always ask whether the patient experiences pain in any part of the body. On the one hand, this may uncover a condition that the patient did not report spontaneously, and, on the other hand, an analysis of the character, location and timing of pain may help confirm the original diagnosis; indeed, in some cases, analysis of the pain also may *add* a new dimension to our original diagnosis.

For example, a woman may present with a chief complaint of mental depression which we diagnose as being caused by Liver-Qi stagnation; before concluding the interrogation, we should ask whether she experiences any pain in any part of the body. If the patient tells us that she suffers from abdominal pain and distension, this would clearly confirm the diagnosis of Liver-Qi stagnation. To carry the example further, if she also suffers from severe period pains, with dark, clotted menstrual blood, this clearly tells us that there is not only Liver-Qi stagnation but also Liver-Blood

As mentioned in the introduction to Interrogation, [Chapter 28](#), I have changed the order of the traditional 10 questions and I assign the first question to pain, but this is not to say that one should always start by asking about pain. The order of questioning should be flexible.

stasis. Since the Liver-Blood stasis is shown purely by the menstrual pain (e.g. the tongue is not Purple), we would not have known about it if we had not asked about pain.

HOW we ask

When asking about pain, we should ask systematically about the following four aspects:

- Location
- Nature
- Timing
- Response to pressure and temperature

Location of pain

The first obvious question is about the location of the pain. It is important in this respect not to accept automatically the patient's description of the location of the pain. Patients often have their own way of describing a certain location, a common one being 'stomach' when they mean lower abdomen. When the pain is in the abdomen it is particularly important to establish exactly where it is, according to the abdominal areas described in [Chapter 38](#), by asking the patient to point to its location. This is even more important in children whose terminology is obviously limited and who often refer to 'tummy ache'.

In channel problems, it is also important to enquire exactly about the location of the pain in order to identify the channel or channels involved. For example, if a patient complains of shoulder pain, we should enquire clearly whether the pain is in the front of (Lung channel), the centre (Large Intestine channel) or the back of the shoulder (Small Intestine channel). However, in channel problems, the identification of the exact location of the pain must be done also with the help of palpation.

Nature of pain

After asking about the location, we should ask about the nature of the pain. First let the patient describe it spontaneously; do not suggest any special terms to him or her. A potential difficulty here is the terminology used by the patient, which will obviously be different from that used in China. With experience, we learn how to 'translate' Western expressions into the Chinese equivalent; for example, 'bloating' indicates 'distension', 'feeling like a weight on the chest' indicates 'feeling of oppression',

'feeling like being pulled down' in the abdomen indicates a 'bearing down' feeling, etc. After letting the patient describe the nature of the pain, if it is still necessary, we can then ask about the nature of the pain according to the traditional Chinese terminology, which, often, Western patients recognize as a very accurate description of their pain. For example, in cases of abdominal pain, when we ask, 'Is the pain accompanied by a feeling of heaviness?' many patients confirm that that is exactly how it feels.

Timing of pain

After asking about the location and nature of the pain, we should then ask about the exact timing of pain, as described below.

Factors affecting pain

Finally, we should ask about the reaction to pressure or temperature. When asking about the reaction of pain to pressure, it is important to formulate the questions in a way that Western patients can understand. Rather than asking, '*Is the pain better or worse with pressure?*' (as one might do with a Chinese patient), we should ask something like, '*Does the pain feel better if you rub it or press it, or do you actually dislike its being touched?*'

When asking about reaction of the pain to temperature, we should also do it in a way that is readily understandable to Western patients. For example, if a patient complains of joint pain, we should ask whether that feels worse when the weather is cold and rainy. We should also enquire whether the application of heat or cold ameliorates or aggravates the pain.

Chinese medicine offers a detailed classification of pain according to five parameters:

- Area of pain
- Nature of pain
- Time of pain
- Factors affecting pain
- Organ versus channel pain.

1. AREA OF PAIN

Localized pain is usually due to Phlegm, Blood stasis or obstruction by Cold and/or Dampness.

Moving pain is usually due to Qi stagnation (unless it is due to Wind in the joints).

2. NATURE OF PAIN

In general, a pain or ache that is mild in nature indicates a Deficiency, whereas a sharp, severe pain is due to a Fullness. It should be noted that a mild pain is usually dull and that a 'dull' pain also may be intense. For example, a headache from Blood deficiency will be mild in its intensity and dull in nature; however, an occipital headache from invasion of external Cold may be dull in its nature but very intense. Thus, when a patient complains of a 'dull' headache, we should clarify whether this is mild (suggesting Deficiency) or intense (suggesting Fullness).

The pain from a Fullness is due to the obstruction of the channels by a pathogenic factor, which may be:

- Exterior pathogenic factor
- Interior Cold or Heat
- Stagnation of Qi
- Stasis of Blood
- Dampness
- Phlegm
- Retention of food.

All these pathogenic factors obstruct the circulation of Qi and/or Blood and therefore cause pain. There is a well-known saying in Chinese medicine that states: 'Obstruction causes pain; if there is no obstruction, there is no pain' (*Bu tong ze tong, tong ze bu tong*). Phlegm does not generally cause pain but may do so in a few cases.

A Deficiency also may cause pain through malnourishment of the channels: in this case, the pain will be mild, more like an ache, and will be clearly alleviated by rest. However, also in Deficiency pain there is some element of stagnation as the deficient Qi fails to move properly.

There are many different types of pain, and the main terms are explained below.

a) Soreness

This is a dull ache that usually occurs in the four limbs or trunk. It is usually due to a Deficiency condition or Dampness.

b) Pain with a sensation of heaviness

This is also a dull ache but accompanied by a sensation of heaviness: this usually occurs in the limbs, head or whole body. It is typical of Dampness or Phlegm.

c) Distending pain

This is a pain accompanied by a sensation of distension (bloating). Chinese patients often actually say they have a '*zhang tong*', that is, a distending pain. No Western patient will ever use this actual expression, but this type of pain is very common in Western patients. English-speaking patients will usually say that they have a pain with a 'bloating' sensation; very often they will not mention the bloating unless asked.

It is therefore very important to elicit the exact symptoms and character of pain with a proper interrogation. A distending pain is typical of Qi stagnation, especially of the Liver. However, it should be noted that other organs may suffer from Qi stagnation too, notably the Stomach, Spleen and Lungs. Thus, a distending pain in the lower abdomen usually indicates Liver- or Spleen-Qi stagnation, in the hypochondrium Liver-Qi stagnation, in the epigastrium Stomach-Qi stagnation, and in the chest Lung-Qi stagnation (although this last one also may be due to the Liver).

AREAS OF STAGNATION OF QI

- Lower abdomen: stagnation of Liver-Qi
- Hypochondrium: stagnation of Liver-Qi
- Epigastrium: stagnation of Stomach-Qi
- Hypochondrium towards epigastrium: Liver-Qi invading the Stomach
- Chest: stagnation of Lung-Qi or Liver-Qi

A distending pain in the head, such as that experienced during a headache or a migraine, is due to Liver-Yang rising. English-speaking patients would usually call this pain 'throbbing' rather than 'distending'.

'Distension' is both a symptom and a sign; that is, it indicates the subjective bloating sensation of the patient, but the bloating also may be felt on palpation when the area feels distended like a drum (this is more easily felt in the epigastrium or lower abdomen). In gynaecology, a distending pain is seen in dysmenorrhoea from Liver-Qi stagnation or premenstrual breast pain and distension also from Liver-Qi stagnation. Pain with distension is usually of a Full nature. Distending pain is treated with warm-pungent herbs that move Qi.

d) Pain with a feeling of fullness

This is an ache or pain accompanied by a sensation of fullness: it usually occurs only in the epigastrium or lower abdomen. A sensation of fullness should be

distinguished from distension (bloating). With distension, the patient feels bloated (like a drum), the area feels like a drum on palpation and the distended abdomen can be seen on observation; with fullness, the patient feels very full, as if after a very heavy meal, perhaps also with a slight nausea, and the area feels *hard* rather than distended on palpation. The distension can be *seen* (and palpated); fullness cannot be seen but can be felt on palpation. Typically, pain with a sensation of fullness indicates retention of food and is related to the Stomach and Spleen. Pain with a feeling of fullness is usually of a Full nature. Fullness is treated with digestive herbs.



Remember: 'distension' and 'fullness' are not the same.

Distension manifests with a bloated feeling, whereas fullness manifests with a full feeling.

e) Pain with a feeling of emptiness

Pain with a feeling of emptiness indicates either Qi and Blood deficiency or Kidney deficiency and often occurs in the head.

f) Pain with a feeling of cold

Pain with a feeling of cold is usually a sharp, stabbing or spastic pain that is clearly accompanied by a pronounced feeling of cold or even shivering and that is alleviated by the application of heat. This type of pain usually occurs in the abdomen or limbs and indicates Full or Empty Cold.

g) Burning pain

Burning pain is accompanied by a burning sensation and always indicates Heat or Empty Heat; it may occur in the epigastrium or in the limbs.

h) Colicky pain

This is a sharp pain of a colicky, cramping nature; it occurs in the epigastrium or, more usually, the lower abdomen. This pain usually indicates Cold in the Intestines, but it also may be due to Blood stasis. In gynaecology, this pain is seen in dysmenorrhoea from Cold in the Uterus. Colicky pain is of a Full nature.

i) Spastic pain

This is a sharp pain accompanied by spasm (contraction) or a sensation of spasm; it usually occurs in the limbs and is related to the sinews and therefore the Liver. It may be due to Liver-Blood deficiency in conjunction with Liver-Qi stagnation or Liver-Yang rising. In the latter instance, it may also occur on the head. Spastic pain is either of a Full nature or a combination of Deficiency (of Liver-Blood) and Fullness (stagnation of Qi).

j) Pain with a distressing feeling

This indicates a pain or ache, usually in the epigastrium or chest, accompanied by a restless, undefined, anxious feeling and perhaps palpitations. It is usually due to retention of Phlegm in the epigastrium affecting the Heart. It is also a typical symptom of rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel causing anxiety and palpitations. This type of pain is usually due to a combination of Deficiency (of the Liver, Spleen or Kidneys) and a Fullness (rebellious Qi). In gynaecology, this type of pain is seen in menopausal problems.

k) Pain with a sensation of stuffiness

This is usually a dull ache accompanied by a feeling of 'stuffiness': it usually occurs in the epigastrium or chest. 'Stuffiness' may be defined as a mild feeling of fullness with an important objective difference on palpation: fullness may be felt on palpation as hardness, whereas with stuffiness the epigastrium feels soft on palpation. A feeling of ache and stuffiness is usually due to a combination of Deficiency (of the Spleen) and Fullness (Heat or Phlegm).

l) Pushing pain

This is a sharp pain accompanied by a feeling as if something was pushing outwards; it occurs in the hypochondrium or epigastrium and is due to severe Qi stagnation.

m) Pulling pain

This is a sharp pain accompanied by a sensation as if the skin were being pulled; it occurs only on the head and is due to Liver-Wind. It is of a Full nature (although

Liver-Wind itself may derive from a Blood or Yin deficiency).

n) Cutting pain

This is a very sharp pain that feels like cutting by a knife. It usually occurs in the lower abdomen and is due to Blood stasis. It is definitely Full in nature.

o) Throbbing pain

This pain is usually severe, and it feels as if there was a throbbing or pulsation. It usually occurs on the head from Liver-Yang rising. It is of a Full nature (although Liver-Yang may rise from Blood or Yin deficiency).

p) Boring pain

This is a severe pain that feels like stabbing with the tip of a knife-blade, a nail or a screw; it is fixed in its location. It is due to Blood stasis and is Full in nature. It may occur in the lower abdomen, epigastrium, hypochondrium, chest or head. In gynaecology, it is seen in dysmenorrhoea from Blood stasis.

q) Lurking pain

Lurking pain, in Chinese called *yin tong*, which means 'latent, hidden or lurking' pain, is not severe, is not acute, is relatively easy to endure but is chronic and persistent. It indicates Qi and Blood deficiency or Empty Cold in the Interior leading to malnourishment of the channels. Lurking pain usually improves with the application of heat; it generally occurs in the abdomen or lower back.

Table 29.1 summarizes the types of pain and their pathology.

TYPES OF PAIN

- Soreness: Deficiency (four limbs or trunk)
- Heaviness: Dampness or Phlegm (limbs, head or whole body)
- Distending: Qi stagnation (hypochondrium, epigastrium, lower abdomen)
- Fullness: retention of food (epigastrium, lower abdomen)
- Emptiness: Qi and Blood deficiency or Kidney deficiency (head)
- Feeling of cold: Cold or Yang deficiency (abdomen or limbs)
- Burning: Heat or Empty Heat (epigastrium or limbs)
- Colicky: Cold or Blood stasis (epigastrium, lower abdomen)
- Spastic: Qi stagnation (limbs, abdomen)
- Distressing: Phlegm or rebellious Qi (chest, epigastrium)
- Stiffness: Deficiency with Heat (chest, epigastrium)
- Pushing: severe Qi stagnation (hypochondrium, epigastrium)
- Pulling: Liver-Wind (head)
- Cutting: Blood stasis (lower abdomen)
- Throbbing: Liver-Yang rising (head)
- Boring: Blood stasis (head, chest, hypochondrium, epigastrium, lower abdomen)
- Lurking: Qi and Blood deficiency or Empty Cold (abdomen, lower back)

3. TIME OF PAIN

Daytime pain is usually due to a dysfunction of Qi or Blood.

Pain at night is due to a deficiency of Yin or to Blood stasis.

Intermittent pain is due to either Qi deficiency or Qi stagnation.

Continuous pain is due to Blood stasis.

Table 29.1 Types of pain and their pathology

Type of pain	Characteristics	Patterns
Soreness	Dull ache that usually occurs in the four limbs or trunk	Deficiency condition or Dampness
Pain with feeling of heaviness	Dull ache accompanied by a sensation of heaviness: this usually occurs in the limbs, head or the whole body	Dampness or Phlegm.
Distending pain, bloating	Subjective bloating sensation, bloating also may be felt on palpation when the area feels distended like a balloon and seen on observation.	Qi stagnation

Table 29.1 Types of pain and their pathology—cont'd

Type of pain	Characteristics	Patterns
Pain with feeling of fullness	The patient feels very full, as if after a heavy meal, perhaps also with a slight nausea, and the area feels <i>hard</i> rather than distended on palpation; fullness cannot be seen on observation	Dampness
Ache with feeling of emptiness	Often occurs in the head	Qi and Blood deficiency or Kidney deficiency
Pain with feeling of cold	Sharp, stabbing or spastic pain that is clearly accompanied by a pronounced feeling of cold or even shivering and that is alleviated by the application of heat	Full or Empty Cold, usually in the abdomen or limbs
Burning pain	Pain with a burning sensation	Full or Empty Heat, usually in the epigastrium or in the limbs
Colicky pain	Sharp pain of a colicky, cramping nature	Cold in the Intestines, Blood stasis, usually in the epigastrium or, more usually, the lower abdomen
Spastic pain	Sharp pain accompanied by spasm (contraction) or a sensation of spasm	Liver-Blood deficiency in conjunction with Liver-Qi stagnation or Liver-Yang rising, usually in the limbs or head, and is related to the sinews and therefore the Liver, either of a Full nature or a combination of Deficiency (of Liver-Blood) and Fullness (stagnation of Qi)
Dull ache	Very mild pain	Deficiency, usually chronic, long-duration ache
Pain with distressing feeling	Pain accompanied by a restless, undefined, anxious feeling and perhaps palpitations, usually in the epigastrium or chest	Retention of Phlegm in the epigastrium affecting the Heart, rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel
Pain with sensation of stuffiness (<i>Pi</i>)	Pain with a mild feeling of fullness while the abdomen feels soft on palpation, usually in epigastrium or chest	Deficiency (of the Spleen) and Fullness (Heat or Phlegm)
Pushing pain	Sharp pain accompanied by a feeling as if something was pushing the area, usually in the hypochondrium or epigastrium	Severe Qi stagnation
Pulling pain	Sharp pain accompanied by a sensation as if the skin were being pulled, usually on the head	Liver-Wind
Cutting pain	Very sharp pain that feels like a knife, usually in the lower abdomen	Blood stasis, definitely Full in nature
Throbbing pain	Severe pain, feels as if there was a throbbing or pulsation, usually on the head, very common in headaches from Liver-Yang rising	Liver-Yang rising
Boring pain	Feels like the stabbing of the tip of a knife-blade, a nail or a screw: it is fixed in its location, usually in the lower abdomen, epigastrium, hypochondrium, chest or head	Blood stasis, Full in nature
Lurking pain	Pain that is not severe, not acute, relatively easy to endure but chronic and persistent, in Chinese called <i>yin tong</i> which means 'latent, hidden or lurking' pain, usually improves with the application of heat, generally in the abdomen or lower back	Qi and Blood deficiency or Empty Cold in the Interior leading to malnourishment of the channels

4. FACTORS AFFECTING PAIN

The main factors affecting pain are as follows:

- Pressure
- Temperature
- Food and drink
- Bowel movement
- Movement and rest.

a) Pressure

Aggravated by pressure: This indicates a Full condition (which may be Dampness, Phlegm, Qi stagnation, Blood stasis or retention of Food). Aggravation by pressure in Full conditions is common in abdominal pain, stomach ache, menstrual pain and joint pain.

Ameliorated by pressure: This indicates a Deficiency condition (e.g. abdominal pain, stomach ache, menstrual pain and joint pain).

b) Temperature

Alleviated by warmth: If a pain is alleviated by the application of heat (such as a hot-water bottle), this indicates that it is due to Cold or Yang deficiency (e.g. backache, joint pain, stomach ache, abdominal pain, menstrual pain). If a pain is alleviated by hot weather, this indicates that it is due to Cold or Yang deficiency (e.g. backache, joint pain). Similarly if the pain is aggravated by cold.

Alleviated by cold: No pain is generally alleviated by the application of cold, except in the case of acute joint sprains. Similarly, no pain is usually alleviated by cold weather.

c) Food and drink

Aggravated by eating: This indicates a Full condition of the Stomach.

Ameliorated by eating: This indicates an Empty condition of the Stomach.

Aggravated by drinking cold liquids: This indicates a Cold condition of the Stomach.

Aggravated by drinking hot liquids: This indicates a Hot condition of the Stomach.

Ameliorated by drinking warm liquids: This indicates a Cold condition of the Stomach.

Ameliorated by drinking cold liquids: This indicates a Hot condition of the Stomach.

d) Bowel movement

Ameliorated by a bowel movement: This indicates a Full condition of the Intestines.

Aggravated by a bowel movement: This indicates an Empty condition of the Intestines or Spleen.

e) Movement and rest

Ameliorated by movement: This indicates stagnation of Qi (e.g. abdominal pain) or Cold (e.g. backache).

Aggravated by movement: This indicates a deficiency of Qi or Blood (e.g. backache).

Ameliorated by rest: This indicates a deficiency of Qi or Blood (e.g. backache, joint pain, menstrual pain).

Aggravated by rest: This indicates stagnation of Qi (e.g. joint pain, backache, headache), stasis of Blood (e.g. joint pain, backache, headache) or Cold (e.g. backache).

5. ORGAN VERSUS CHANNEL PAIN

Besides the above differentiation, another important one is that between pain due to involvement of the internal organs with their respective channels and pain due to involvement of the channels only. There are four possible situations:

- channel pain deriving from a channel pathology only
- organ and channel pain deriving from an organ pathology
- organ pain deriving from organ pathology
- channel pain only deriving from organ pathology.

Most pains due to sprains, traumas or Painful Obstruction Syndrome (due to Wind, Cold or Dampness) involve a channel pathology only. The second possibility is that of an organ pathology causing a pain in the organ as well as in its related channel, such as a shoulder pain on the Large Intestine channel associated with Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine causing diarrhoea (Fig. 29.1).

The third possibility is that of an organ pain deriving from an organ pathology; this is of course a very common

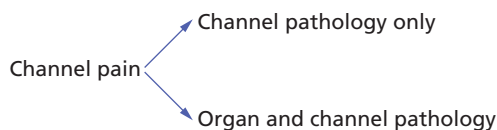


Figure 29.1. Derivation of channel pain from channel or organ pathology.

Table 29.2 Characteristics of pain from Deficiency, Fullness, Cold and Heat

	Deficiency	Fullness	Cold	Heat
Pressure	Alleviated	Aggravated	—	—
Food	Alleviated	Aggravated	Alleviated by hot food and aggravated by cold food	Alleviated by cold food and aggravated by hot food
Type	Dull, lingering	Sharp	Cramping, spastic	Burning
Temperature	—	—	Alleviated by application of heat	Alleviated by application of cold
Bowel movement	Aggravated	Alleviated	Aggravated	Alleviated
Posture	Better lying down	Better sitting up	—	—
Onset	Slow, gradual	Sudden	—	—
Vomiting	Aggravated	Alleviated	Aggravated	Alleviated
Rest/exercise	Better with rest	Better with exercise	Better with exercise	Worse with exercise

**Figure 29.2.** Organ pathology leading to organ pain.**Figure 29.3.** Organ pathology leading to channel pain.

situation, such as abdominal pain from Dampness in the Intestines, chest pain from Heart-Blood stasis, etc. (Fig. 29.2).

The fourth possibility is that of an organ pathology leading only to a pain in its related channel, for example Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine manifesting only with pain in the arm along the Large Intestine channel; this situation, however, is rather rare (Fig. 29.3).

Thus, the two most important diagnostic factors when confronted with pain are:

- Whether the pain derives from a Deficiency or a Fullness
- Whether the pain involves the internal organs and channels or the channels only.

Pain deriving from a Fullness, for example Blood stasis, is easily explained; stagnant Blood obstructs the circulation of Qi and Blood, which causes pain.

As for pain from Deficiency, this is due to malnourishment of organs and channels. However, also in pain from Deficiency there is an element of stagnation because the deficient Qi, Yang, Blood or Yin also causes a certain degree of obstruction.

Of the pain from Fullness, the main causes are Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Cold and Dampness (in this order). Heat does not by itself usually cause pain, but it does more so when it is combined with Dampness. Phlegm does not usually cause pain, but it may do so in certain cases.

Finally, Table 29.1 summarizes the types of pain and their pathology, and Table 29.2 tabulates the characteristics of pain from Deficiency, Fullness, Cold and Heat.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how to ask about pain with respect to location, nature, timing, and the factors that affect it.
- The classification of organ and channel pain.

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Food and Taste

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask**When we ask****How we ask****Introduction****Main patterns of digestive symptoms***Qi deficiency**Qi stagnation**Qi rebellious**Blood stasis**Dampness**Phlegm**Retention of food***Food****Appetite***Excessive hunger**Aversion to food**Hunger but no desire to eat***Taste****Nausea and vomiting***Case history***Belching****Sour regurgitation***Case history*

The questions regarding reactions to foods, appetite, hunger and taste are aimed primarily at establishing the state of the Stomach and Spleen.

The present chapter will be articulated into the following eight headings:

1. Introduction
2. Main patterns of digestive symptoms
3. Food
4. Appetite
5. Taste
6. Nausea and vomiting
7. Belching
8. Sour regurgitation.

WHY we ask

We always need to ask about digestive symptoms because the Stomach and Spleen are the source of Postnatal Qi, and therefore a pathology in these two organs eventually affects other organs. A pathology of Stomach and Spleen is also very common in the patients we see.

WHEN we ask

I always ask about the state of the digestive system before concluding the interrogation of the patient, unless, of course, the presenting problem is a digestive one.

HOW we ask

It is important to ask about digestive symptoms in detail. It would not suffice to ask simply '*Do you have any digestive complaints?*' We need to ask whether the patient ever experiences any distension, bloating, fullness, pain, heaviness, hiccup, nausea, vomiting, belching, loose stools, diarrhoea, etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Stomach and Spleen are the Root of Postnatal Qi, and their state affects all the other internal organs; for this reason, it is always necessary to ask questions to assess their state. This is all the more important given the frequency of digestive complaints in Western patients.

The Stomach controls the rotting and ripening of food, and for this reason it is compared to a bubbling cauldron in the Middle Burner. The Spleen controls the transformation and transportation (*Yun Hua*) of Qi, and it therefore affects the transportation and transformation of food essences in the Middle Burner. Thus, the Stomach and Spleen together are responsible for the proper digestion of food. However, in Chinese medicine, the function of the Stomach and Spleen goes beyond that of digesting food as, in the process of doing so, they are the source of Food Qi (*Gu Qi*) which, in turn, forms the

Gathering Qi (*Zong Qi*) and True Qi (*Zhen Qi*). Thus, the Stomach and Spleen are the source of Post-Heaven Qi and an enquiry into the state of these two organs is crucial in every case.

The Stomach and Spleen are particularly important also because they are in the Middle Burner with opposing directions of Qi: Stomach-Qi descends while Spleen-Qi ascends. A normal coordination of these two directions of flow is vital for a proper transformation and transportation of Qi, food essences and fluids; these two organs are at a crucial crossroads in the Middle Burner, and an impairment of their movement of Qi has immediate repercussions on Qi, Dampness and Phlegm pathology.

In every pathology of the Stomach and Spleen there is some derangement of the proper flow of Qi. For example, when Stomach-Qi rebels upwards rather than descending, it causes symptoms such as hiccup, nausea, vomiting and belching; even when Stomach-Qi is deficient it may fail to descend properly and may cause some of the above symptoms but to a much milder degree. When Spleen-Qi descends rather than ascends, it may cause loose stools or diarrhoea. When there is retention of food in the Middle Burner there is some failure of Stomach-Qi to descend.

2. MAIN PATTERNS OF DIGESTIVE SYMPTOMS

The main patterns causing digestive symptoms are:

- Qi deficiency
- Qi stagnation
- Qi rebellious
- Blood stasis
- Dampness
- Phlegm
- Retention of food.

a) Qi deficiency

Qi deficiency of the Spleen causes loose stools and slight abdominal distension. Qi deficiency of the Stomach causes slight epigastric discomfort. If there is a pain, it would be slight, dull and better after eating.

b) Qi stagnation

Qi stagnation causes distension which affects the epigastrium if the Stomach is primarily involved or the abdomen if the Spleen is primarily involved. If there is

a pain, it would be strongly associated with distension. 'Distension' is usually described as 'bloating' by English-speaking patients.

c) Qi rebellious

Qi rebellious of the Stomach causes belching, hiccup, nausea and vomiting, whereas Qi sinking of the Spleen (i.e. descending rather than ascending) causes loose stools or diarrhoea.

d) Blood stasis

Blood stasis causes intense, fixed, stabbing pain which is epigastric in the case of the Stomach and abdominal in the case of the Spleen.

e) Dampness

Dampness causes a feeling of fullness and heaviness in the epigastrium if the Stomach is affected and in the abdomen if the Spleen is affected.

f) Phlegm

Phlegm causes a feeling of oppression; this usually affects the epigastrium rather than the abdomen and the Stomach more than the Spleen.

g) Retention of food

Retention of food causes a feeling of fullness in the epigastrium if the Stomach is affected and in the abdomen if the Spleen is affected: the latter affects children more than adults.

Table 30.1 illustrates the differentiation of symptoms between Stomach and Spleen in the various patterns.

Thus, the five main sensations experienced in the digestive system are a feeling of distension, fullness, oppression, stuffiness and heaviness. Table 30.2 illustrates the pathology and diagnostic manifestation of these five sensations.

The following are herbal formulae for these five sensations:

- Feeling of oppression: Ban Xia Hou Po Tang *Pinellia-Magnolia Decoction*.
- Feeling of distension: Chai Hu Shu Gan Tang *Bupleurum Soothing the Liver Decoction*.

Table 30.1 Differentiation of Stomach and Spleen digestive symptoms according to pattern

Pattern	Stomach	Spleen
Qi deficiency	Slight epigastric discomfort, dull, slight pain improved by eating, poor appetite	Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension
Qi stagnation	Epigastric distension	Abdominal distension
Qi rebellious	Hiccup, belching, nausea, vomiting	Loose stools, diarrhoea
Blood stasis	Stabbing, fixed epigastric pain, vomiting of blood	Stabbing, fixed abdominal pain, blood in stools
Dampness	A feeling of fullness and heaviness of the epigastrium, sticky taste, poor appetite	A feeling of fullness and heaviness of the abdomen
Phlegm	A feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sticky taste, nausea, poor appetite	
Retention of food	A feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, nausea, poor appetite	A feeling of fullness and pain of the abdomen

Table 30.2 Differentiation of sensations of oppression, distension, fullness, stuffiness and heaviness

Pinyin	Chinese	English	Subjective sensation	Objective finding	Pathology
Men	闷	Oppression, 'tightness'	A feeling of oppression in the epigastrium extending to the chest	No objective finding, purely subjective	Phlegm, severe Qi stagnation, emotional component
Zhang	胀	Distension, 'bloating', 'bursting'	A feeling of distension and bloating in the epigastrium or abdomen	Abdomen feels distended like a drum on palpation	Qi stagnation
Man	满	Fullness	A feeling of fullness (associated with nausea if in the epigastrium)	The abdomen protrudes visibly and is hard on palpation	Dampness, retention of food, accumulation of Phlegm-Fluids (<i>Tan Yin</i>), Organ-Pattern of Bright-Yang
Pi	痞	Stuffiness ('focal distension' by some authors)	A feeling of stuffiness, a feeling of a lump, an uncomfortable and slightly oppressive sensation: usually in the epigastrium or chest	The abdomen feels soft on palpation (which somewhat contradicts the patient's stuffy feeling)	Stomach-Qi deficiency, Stomach-Heat, mixed Deficiency and Excess with secondary Qi stagnation, Damp-Heat injuring Spleen-Yin
Zhong	重	Heaviness	A feeling of heaviness of the epigastrium or abdomen	No objective finding, purely subjective	Dampness or Phlegm

- Feeling of fullness: Bao He Wan *Preserving and Harmonizing Pill*.
- Feeling of stuffiness: Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang *Pinellia Draining the Heart Decoction*.
- Feeling of heaviness: Huo Po Xia Ling Tang *Agastache-Magnolia-Pinellia-Poria Decoction*.

The acupuncture extra point Pigen is indicated for the feeling of stuffiness and disharmony of Liver and

Spleen. This point is located on the lower back, 3.5 *cun* from the midline, lateral to the inferior border of the spinous process of L-1 (i.e. level with BL-22 Sanjiaoshu).

3. FOOD

Especially if the patient complains of digestive symptoms, it is imperative to ask about the effect of eating on pain.

If a digestive pain is alleviated by eating, it means it is of an Empty nature; if it is aggravated by eating, it is of a Full nature.

Food intolerance or allergies are generally due to either Spleen deficiency or Stomach-Heat, depending on the reaction. If the intolerance or allergy manifests with digestive problems and lethargy, it may be due to Spleen-Qi deficiency, whereas if it manifests with skin reactions, it may be due to Stomach-Heat.

A feeling of distension after eating indicates Qi stagnation; a feeling of fullness indicates retention of food or Dampness; a feeling of oppression of the epigastrium indicates Phlegm; a feeling of stuffiness (a mild feeling of fullness but the epigastrium is soft on palpation) indicates Heat or Phlegm occurring against a background of deficiency. A feeling of heaviness of the epigastrium indicates the retention of Dampness.

Digestive problems alleviated by the ingestion of warm liquids or aggravated by cold liquids indicate Cold in the Stomach and Spleen; whereas if they are aggravated by the ingestion of warm liquids and alleviated by cold liquids, it means that they are due to Stomach-Heat.

Inability to digest fats indicates Gall-Bladder Dampness.

DIGESTIVE SYMPTOMS

- Food intolerance: Spleen deficiency or Stomach-Heat
- Feeling of distension: Qi stagnation
- Feeling of fullness: retention of food or Dampness
- Feeling of oppression: Phlegm
- Feeling of stuffiness: Deficiency with Heat or Phlegm
- Feeling of heaviness: Dampness or Phlegm
- Inability to digest fats: Dampness in Gall-Bladder

4. APPETITE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 69

A normal appetite is an indication that the Stomach and Spleen are healthy. For social and historical reasons, lack of appetite is always considered a bad sign in China and always features as a prominent symptom in the pattern of Spleen-Qi deficiency. In the West, lack of appetite is less common and is not usually considered a very important symptom unless, of course, it leads to anorexia. Another cultural difference between Western countries and China is that when Chinese people are under stress they lose their appetite whereas in the West patients tend to 'pick' constantly, eat more or eat sweets when under stress.

Lack of appetite indicates usually Spleen-Qi deficiency but it may also be due to a Fullness and specifically to Dampness obstructing the Middle Burner; in this case, it will be associated with a feeling of fullness and of mild nausea.

a) Excessive hunger

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 69

Excessive hunger usually indicates Stomach-Heat; however, there is an important exception to this rule. In the West, excessive hunger leading to constantly 'picking' is often a sign of emotional stress and frustration rather than an actual Stomach-Heat.

Excessive hunger without desire to eat is due to either Damp-Heat in the Stomach or Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat: Stomach-Heat causes the feeling of hunger but Dampness in the first instance or Stomach-Yin deficiency in the second instance make the patient reluctant to eat.

b) Aversion to food

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 69

'Aversion to food' is called *yan shi* in Chinese and indicates a strong aversion to eating and to the smell of food. 'Aversion to food' differs from poor appetite in so far as it implies a strong disgust of food. This symptom is obviously seen in food poisoning, but, in chronic cases, it also may be seen in retention of food. If aversion to food is accompanied by a very thick, sticky taste, it is due to Dampness in the Middle Burner affecting Liver, Gall-Bladder, Stomach and Spleen. Aversion to food in pregnancy is due to the Qi of the Penetrating Vessel rebelling upwards.

AVERSION TO FOOD

- Food poisoning
- Retention of food
- Dampness in the Middle Burner
- Pregnancy

c) Hunger but no desire to eat

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 69

This symptom may seem paradoxical, but it does occur occasionally: the patient feels hungry, or, more accurately, the stomach feels hunger pangs but the patient does not want to ingest food. This symptom may be due to

two causes: Damp-Heat in the Stomach (the Heat causes hunger but the obstruction of the Middle Burner by Dampness makes the patient reluctant to eat), or the pattern of 'Stomach strong–Spleen weak' (when a Stomach Full condition causes hunger and a Spleen deficiency makes the patient reluctant to eat).

5. TASTE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 69](#)

A normal taste sensation depends primarily on the state of the Stomach and Spleen and reflects a healthy state of these two organs and a normal state of fluids: thus, a loss of taste sensation often indicates a deficiency of Spleen and Stomach. Loss of the sense of taste accompanied by over-secretion of saliva indicates a deficiency of Stomach and Spleen with retention of Cold in the Stomach. Loss of taste also may be due to retention of Dampness in the Middle Burner.

In most cases, a particular taste indicates a Full rather than an Empty condition of the relevant organ.

A bitter taste indicates either Liver-Fire or Heart-Fire; in the former case, the bitter taste is more or less constant, whilst in the case of Heart-Fire it will be present only in the morning after a bad night's sleep. A bitter taste also may indicate Heat or Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder.



Remember:

- Bitter taste from Liver-Fire: constant
- Bitter taste from Heart-Fire: in the morning after a bad night's sleep

A sweet taste indicates either Spleen deficiency or Damp-Heat.

A sour taste indicates retention of food in the Stomach, a disharmony of Liver and Stomach or Liver- and Stomach-Heat.

A salty taste may indicate a Kidney-Yin deficiency or a severe Kidney-Yang deficiency with fluids rising up to the mouth.

A pungent taste indicates Lung-Heat and/or Stomach-Heat.

A sticky sensation in the mouth indicates Dampness or Phlegm, usually in the digestive system.

Western patients are often unable to describe the kind of taste they experience: very few report a pungent, sour or salty taste for example. Many patients, when asked, are unable to say whether they experience a sticky

sensation in the mouth but quite a few report experiencing a 'metallic' taste: I interpret this as a 'sticky' sensation in the mouth.

TASTE

- Loss of sense of taste: Stomach and Spleen deficiency
- Bitter taste: Liver-Fire or Heart-Fire
- Sweet taste: Spleen deficiency or Damp-Heat
- Sour taste: retention of food in the Stomach, disharmony of Liver and Stomach, Liver- and Stomach-Heat
- Salty taste: Kidney deficiency
- Pungent taste: Lung-Heat
- Sticky sensation in the mouth: Dampness

6. NAUSEA AND VOMITING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 69](#); Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

There are several Chinese terms referring to nausea and vomiting, expressing varying characteristics or degrees of severity. The Chinese term *E Xin* means 'nausea'; *Ou* means vomiting accompanied by a sound; *Tu* means vomiting without sound; *Gan ou* indicates short retching with a low sound; *Yue* indicates long retching with a loud sound (before the Ming dynasty this term indicated 'hiccup'). The two Chinese terms *Ou* and *Tu* are usually used together to indicate vomiting.

Stomach-Qi normally descends; if it ascends, it may cause nausea and/or vomiting. Thus, nausea and vomiting are by definition due to rebellious Stomach-Qi ascending; this is not to say, however, that they are always due to a Full condition, as nausea and vomiting also may be due to a Stomach deficiency. The pathological mechanism is different in each case; in Full conditions of the Stomach, Stomach-Qi rebels upwards *actively*, whereas in Empty conditions, it fails to descend.



- In nausea and vomiting from Full conditions, Stomach-Qi *rebels upwards* (Ren-13 Shangwan).
- In nausea and vomiting from Empty conditions, Stomach-Qi *fails to descend* (Ren-10 Xiawan).

Therefore, although nausea and vomiting always involve rebellious Stomach-Qi, this will be combined with various Stomach pathologies of the Full or Empty type such as Stomach-Cold, Stomach-Heat, Stomach-Yin deficiency, etc. This different pathological mechanism explains the different action of the two points Ren-13

Shangwan and Ren-10 Xiawan: the former actively subdues rebellious Stomach-Qi, whereas the latter helps Stomach-Qi descend.

A mild feeling of nausea is usually due to a deficiency of Stomach-Qi, with Stomach-Qi unable to descend. A strong feeling of nausea and vomiting is due to rebellious Stomach-Qi ascending; this may be associated with stagnation, Cold or Heat.

Profuse and loud vomiting of food soon after eating indicates a Full condition of the Stomach; vomiting of fluids with a low sound sometime after eating indicates an Empty condition of the Stomach.

Vomiting of sour fluids indicates stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Stomach. Vomiting of bitter fluids indicates Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder. Vomiting of thin, watery fluids indicates Cold in the Stomach. Vomiting soon after eating suggests a Heat condition while vomiting some hours after eating suggests a Cold or Empty condition.

NAUSEA AND VOMITING

- Mild nausea: Stomach-Qi deficiency
- Severe nausea/vomiting: rebellious Stomach-Qi
- Vomiting soon after eating: Stomach Full condition
- Vomiting of fluids: Stomach Empty condition
- Vomiting of sour fluids: stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Stomach
- Vomiting of bitter fluids: Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder
- Vomiting of thin, watery fluids: Cold in the Stomach
- Vomiting immediately after eating: Heat
- Vomiting some hours after eating: Cold

Case History

A 44-year-old woman had been suffering from palpitations for 8 years. 'Palpitations' was just a subjective symptom of a feeling of her heart thumping in her chest and was not associated with tachycardia. The palpitations were always worse before her period. She complained of nausea and an epigastric pain which was experienced just under the sternum, a sticky taste and a feeling of a lump in the throat. She also complained of experiencing a dry mouth occasionally. She occasionally suffered from tinnitus.

Her periods were basically normal, coming every 4 weeks, lasting 6 days and not painful. The only problem associated with the periods was premenstrual tension.

Her complexion was dull and sallow without lustre, and her eyes were very dull and lacked lustre to an extreme degree.

Her tongue was of a normal colour, except for a Red tip. It had a Heart crack, and, although it could not be defined as being peeled, the coating was not sufficient. Her pulse was Fine on the right and Floating-Empty on the left.

Diagnosis

The aggravation of the palpitations before the period, together with the nausea, epigastric pain under the sternum and the feeling of a lump in the throat, indicate a condition of rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel, as this vessel flows through the stomach, connects with the heart, traverses the chest and goes over the throat (on its way to the face).

However, the pulse, being Fine on the right, and the dull-sallow complexion clearly show a condition of Blood deficiency, while the Floating-Empty nature of the pulse on the left side and the insufficient coating on the tongue show the beginning of Yin deficiency (of the Liver, Kidneys and Heart). In this case, therefore, the condition of rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel is secondary to the condition of Blood and Yin deficiency; in other words, the Qi of the Penetrating Vessel rebels upward *because* there is a deficiency of Blood and Yin. In fact, the Penetrating Vessel is the Sea of Blood and it is therefore easily affected by Blood deficiency. The treatment principle in this case, therefore, should be to nourish Blood and Yin (of the Heart and Liver) primarily and to subdue rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel secondarily.

The Heart crack and the very dull appearance of the eyes indicate a disturbed Mind and a strong propensity to emotional problems.

7. BELCHING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 69](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 53](#)

Belching always indicates Stomach-Qi rebelling upwards: this may be due to a purely Full condition in which case the belching is violent and loud or it may be due to a Deficient condition in which case the belching is mild and with a low sound.

The most common cause of belching is Liver-Qi invading the Stomach and causing Stomach-Qi to rebel upwards: this is accompanied by epigastric and hypochondrial distension.

Retention of food (common in children) also may cause belching, in which case it is accompanied by sour regurgitation and epigastric fullness.

Deficient causes of belching include Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency and Stomach-Yin deficiency; in these cases the belching is mild and the sound of it is weak.

8. SOUR REGURGITATION

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 69

Sour regurgitation describes an acid feeling in the oesophagus, which is caused by acid reflux. Like belching, it is also a form of rebellious Stomach-Qi. The most common cause is Liver-Qi invading the Stomach and causing Stomach-Qi to rebel upwards.

Retention of Food is another possible cause of sour regurgitation. Other causes include Dampness in the Stomach which may be associated with Heat or with Cold.

preventing Stomach-Qi from descending, which causes the belching and sour regurgitation. However, the tongue and pulse show predominantly Deficiency conditions and in particular, deficiency of Spleen-Qi (Weak pulse), a slight Stomach-Yin deficiency (lack of coating in the centre) and a Liver-Blood deficiency (Pale sides and Choppy pulse). In conditions of rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach and Spleen, one can distinguish two situations: one when the primary problem is a disharmony of the Liver channel caused by emotional problems and the other when the primary problem is a weakness of the Stomach and Spleen, which 'allow' themselves to be invaded by the Liver. In this case, the latter situation clearly applies. This distinction is important to determine the appropriate treatment principle because in the first situation, the primary aim is to subdue rebellious Liver-Qi and the secondary one to tonify the Stomach and Spleen; in the second situation, the primary aim is to tonify the Stomach and Spleen and the secondary one to subdue rebellious Liver-Qi.

Case History

A 42-year-old woman complained of indigestion, belching, acidity, sour regurgitation and epigastric distension. She had been suffering from this problem for several years. Her appetite was normal, there was no nausea and her stools were normal. Her complexion was dull-pale.

Her tongue was Pale on the sides, slightly Swollen and very slightly lacking coating in the centre. Her pulse was Weak and Choppy.

Diagnosis

The digestive symptoms clearly suggest the condition of rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach and



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how to ask about food and taste.
- The Stomach and Spleen digestive signs and symptoms of the main patterns.
- The sensations of oppression, distension, fullness, stuffiness and heaviness.
- The clinical significance of appetite, taste, nausea and vomiting, belching and sour regurgitation.

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Stools and Urine

CHAPTER CONTENTS

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Case history

Urine

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Colour

Amount

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Cloudiness

Incontinence

Urination at night

Pain

Smell

The bowel movement and urination reflect primarily the state of the Yang organs and specifically the Large Intestine, Small Intestine and Bladder. Apart from these organs, others also influence defecation and urination: in particular, the Spleen, Liver and Kidneys influence defecation while the Kidneys, Liver, Spleen and Triple Burner influence urination. Defecation and urination generally reflect the state of organs in the Lower Burner and in particular the transportation, transformation and excretion of fluids in the Lower Burner, which is under the control of the Triple Burner.

WHY we ask

Questions about bowel movement and urination are important and should always be asked. Apart from telling us about the state of the digestive and urinary systems themselves, they serve to establish the Full or Empty and Hot or Cold nature of the condition.

WHEN we ask

Unless the presenting problem concerns the functions of urination and defecation, I generally ask about them towards the end of the consultation.

HOW we ask

When asking about urination and defecation it is important to be specific: asking '*Are your bowels regular?*' may elicit a positive response when the patient means that he or she evacuates the bowels once every 3 days *regularly*. Similarly, if we ask whether the urination is 'frequent' (by which we mean 'too frequent') the patient might answer affirmatively when it is normal. We should therefore ask precisely how many times the patient evacuates his or her bowels and how many times he or she urinates in a day (bearing in mind seasonal variations, i.e. urination is less frequent in summertime).

We should bear in mind that in most Western countries many people force themselves to drink a lot of water in the mistaken belief that *it flushes the kidneys*; this means urination will be much more frequent than normal and that the colour of the urine will be paler, making diagnosing from urination more difficult.

1. STOOLS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 72](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapters 53](#) and [54](#)

When asking about stools we should ask about the following aspects systematically:

- Frequency
- Consistency of stools
- Shape
- Colour
- Odour and sounds
- Abdominal pain related to evacuation.

The bowel movement is an important indicator of the state of the digestive system and specifically of the

Large Intestine and Stomach. These two organs are connected within the Bright Yang system, and their pathology is often interconnected. For example, Heat in the Stomach is easily transmitted to the Large Intestine; Stomach-Qi failing to descend may cause constipation, etc. However, other organs also play a role in defecation, especially the Liver, which should assist defecation with its free flow of Qi; the Kidneys, which control the two lower Yin orifices, that is the urethra and anus; and the Spleen, which controls the transportation of Qi.

The normal bowel movement should occur at least once a day. The stools should be formed, and not too hard, not dry and without excessive smell. Evacuation should be easy and effortless.



The Large Intestine, Small Intestine, Stomach, Spleen, Liver, Kidneys and Triple Burner all affect defecation.

a) Frequency

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 72

A normal bowel movement is once or twice a day. Any evacuation that occurs with less frequency than this constitutes constipation. A bowel movement (which may or may not be loose) occurring more than three times a day is considered to be too frequent.

Constipation is the most common disturbance of frequency of evacuation, but its clinical significance cannot be separated from the consistency of the stools.

Constipation indicates not only the infrequent passage of stools, but also excessive dryness of the stools or difficulty and straining in passing stools.

Acute constipation with thirst and yellow tongue coating indicates acute Heat in the Stomach and Intestines.

Chronic constipation in old people or women may be due to Blood or Kidney deficiency; in this case the stools would be slightly dry and there would be other signs of Blood or Kidney deficiency.

If the stools are bitty, small and difficult to pass, it indicates Liver-Qi stagnation or Heat in the Intestines (if they are also dry); when it is due to Liver-Qi stagnation, it often alternates with diarrhoea or loose stools as so often happens in irritable bowel syndrome.

Constipation with dry stools indicates Heat in the Large Intestine or Yin deficiency and dryness of the Stomach, Intestines or Kidneys. If there is difficulty in

evacuation but the stools are not dry, it indicates Liver-Qi stagnation.

Constipation with abdominal pain that is relieved by the bowel movement indicates retention of food or Dampness in the Intestines; constipation with abdominal pain and distension that is not relieved by the bowel movement indicates Liver-Qi stagnation. Constipation with abdominal pain and a pronounced feeling of cold indicates Cold in the Intestines.

Spleen-Qi deficiency normally causes loose stools, but in a few cases a severe Spleen-Qi deficiency may cause constipation because the deficient Spleen-Qi fails to move and transport. Constipation also may be caused by a so-called 'shut down' of the Qi mechanism; this happens when there is an impairment of the ascending and descending of Qi in the digestive system, which may be seen, for example, after surgery.

Alternation of constipation and loose stools indicates stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen.

CONSTIPATION

- Acute constipation with yellow tongue coating: Heat in Intestines
- Chronic constipation in women: Blood or Kidney deficiency
- Constipation with dry stools: Heat in the Intestines or Yin deficiency
- Difficulty in evacuation, stools not dry: Liver-Qi stagnation
- Constipation relieved by bowel movement: retention of food
- Constipation with abdominal pain and distension: Liver-Qi stagnation
- Constipation with colicky abdominal pain: Cold in the Intestines
- Alternation of constipation and loose stools: stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen
- Small, pellet-like stools, difficult to pass: Liver-Qi stagnation or Heat in the Intestines

If the stools are not loose but very frequent and the person cannot hold them easily, it indicates deficiency of the Central Qi, that is the Qi of Stomach and Spleen; it also indicates sinking of Spleen-Qi.



CLINICAL NOTE

In my opinion, it is important to ask about the state of the bowel movements also as a guide to the use of herbal medicine. If I am prescribing formulae with Da Huang or bitter-cold herbs that stimulate the bowel movement, I do not use them if the patient has diarrhoea, but they can be used if the patient has constipation or if the bowel movements are regular.

b) Consistency

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 72](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

The normal stool is well formed, not loose, not too dry and floating.

An excessively dry stool indicates Heat in the Intestines, Blood deficiency (of the Liver) or Yin deficiency (which may affect the Large Intestine, Spleen, Liver or Kidneys).

Loose stools generally indicate a deficiency of the Spleen and/or Kidneys. A deficiency of the Spleen is by far the most common cause of chronic diarrhoea or loose stools; a Kidney deficiency is a common cause of chronic diarrhoea in the elderly. If the diarrhoea is severe and very watery, it usually indicates Yang deficiency (of the Spleen and/or Kidneys), whereas loose stools usually indicate Spleen-Qi deficiency.

The most common cause of chronic diarrhoea is Spleen-Qi or Spleen-Yang deficiency. Chronic, watery diarrhoea occurring every day in the very early morning is due to Kidney-Yang deficiency and is called 'cock-crow diarrhoea' or '5th-hour diarrhoea' (this refers to the ancient Chinese way of measuring time every 24 hours).

There are, however, also Full causes of diarrhoea and principally Dampness (which could be associated with Heat or Cold) and Cold in the Spleen and Intestines.

The presence of a foul smell with the diarrhoea or loose stools suggests Heat, whereas the absence of smell is either normal or suggestive of Cold.

The presence of pain with the diarrhoea or loose stools suggests Liver-Qi stagnation, Cold or Damp-Heat.

The presence of mucus in the stools indicates Dampness, whereas the presence of blood indicates deficient Spleen-Qi not holding Blood, Damp-Heat or Blood stasis in the Intestines. Acute diarrhoea or loose stools usually is due to invasion of external Dampness, which may be seen in food poisoning; with a foul smell it is due to Damp-Heat and without smell to Damp-Cold.

Undigested food in the stools indicates Spleen-Qi deficiency; a burning sensation of the anus indicates Damp-Heat in the Intestines.

Sticky stools that necessitate brushing the toilet with a toilet brush every time indicate Dampness in the Intestines.

Case History

A 25-year-old woman had been suffering from ulcerative colitis for 1 year, after the break-up of a relationship.

LOOSE STOOLS/DIARRHOEA

- Dry stools: Heat in Intestines, Blood deficiency, Yin deficiency
- Loose stools: Spleen-Qi or Spleen-Yang deficiency
- Chronic diarrhoea: Spleen and/or Kidney deficiency
- Chronic, watery diarrhoea in the early morning: Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Diarrhoea with foul smell: Heat in the Intestines
- Diarrhoea with pain: Liver-Qi stagnation or Cold
- Diarrhoea with mucus: Dampness in the Intestines
- Diarrhoea with blood: Damp-Heat or Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Acute diarrhoea: external Dampness
- Frequent but not loose stools: Spleen-Qi sinking
- Undigested food in the stools: Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Mucus in stools: Dampness in Intestines
- Burning sensation in the anus: Damp-Heat in the Intestines
- Black or dark stools: Blood stasis
- Blood before stools: Blood-Heat
- Stools before blood: Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Diarrhoea with borborygmi: Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Sticky stools: Dampness in Intestine

Her main symptoms were diarrhoea with blood and mucus in the stools but without pain. At the time of her consultation, she was taking oral prednisone.

Apart from this she had no other symptoms except that her periods had not returned yet after stopping the contraceptive pill 1.5 years previously. Her complexion was dull-yellow, and her skin was quite greasy.

Her tongue was slightly Pale with a sticky-yellow coating, and her pulse was Weak on the right and noticeably Wiry on both Rear positions.

Diagnosis

The abdominal symptoms of diarrhoea with mucus and blood and the sticky coating on the tongue clearly indicate Damp-Heat in the Intestines, in this case occurring against a background of Spleen-Qi deficiency, as shown by the Pale tongue and the Weak pulse on the right. In intestinal diseases such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease, the pulse is frequently Wiry on both Rear positions.

c) Shape

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 72](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

Stools like small pellets indicate Liver-Qi stagnation or Heat if they are also dry. Long and thin stools like pencils indicate Spleen-Qi deficiency (bear in mind that they could also indicate carcinoma of the bowel) ([Fig. 31.1](#)).

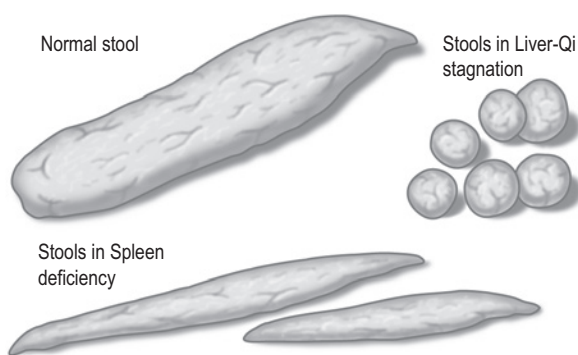


Figure 31.1. Normal stools, stools like pellets and thin-long stools.

d) Colour

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 72](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

Normal stools are light-brown in colour. Pale-yellow stools indicate Empty Heat (of Spleen, Large Intestine or Kidneys). Dark-yellow stools indicate Full Heat (of Large Intestine). Dark stools may indicate the presence of occult blood, and they generally indicate Heat (of the Large Intestine).

Pale, almost white stools indicate Cold in the Large Intestine. Green stools indicate Liver-Qi invading the Spleen. Red stools indicate the presence of fresh blood, which may be due to either Heat in the Large Intestine or Spleen-Qi deficiency. Greenish-bluish stools indicate the penetration of external Cold into the Large Intestine (common in babies).

Black or very dark stools indicate Blood stasis. Bright-red blood coming before the stools and splashing in all directions indicates Damp-Heat in the Intestines. If the blood comes before the stools and is turbid and the anus feels heavy and painful, it indicates Blood Heat. If the stools come before the blood and are watery, it indicates that Spleen-Qi is deficient and is unable to hold Blood.

COLOUR OF STOOLS

- Light-brown: normal
- Pale-yellow: Empty Heat
- Dark-yellow: Full Heat
- Dark: Heat
- Pale: Cold
- Green: Liver-Qi invading Spleen
- Red: Large Intestine Heat or Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Greenish-bluish: Cold in Large Intestine
- Very dark, black: Blood stasis
- Bright-red blood before stools: Damp-Heat
- Turbid blood before stools: Blood Heat
- Stools before watery blood: Spleen-Qi deficiency

e) Odour and sounds

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 72](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapters 53 and 54](#)

Generally speaking, an absence of smell is either normal or indicates Cold in the Intestines. A strong, foul smell usually indicates Heat and especially Damp-Heat. A sour smell indicates a disharmony of Liver and Spleen.

Flatulence may be due to Liver-Qi stagnation, to Damp-Heat if there is a foul smell or to Spleen-Qi deficiency if there is no smell.

Borborygmi with loose stools indicates Spleen deficiency; borborygmi with abdominal distension and without loose stools indicates stagnation of Liver-Qi.

f) Abdominal pain related to evacuation

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 72](#)

The feeling of distension before evacuation indicates Liver-Qi stagnation. Abdominal pain before evacuation but not relieved by it also indicates Liver-Qi stagnation. Abdominal pain during evacuation (and generally relieved by it) indicates Dampness in the Large Intestine or retention of food. Abdominal pain during evacuation, which is not relieved by it, generally indicates Cold in the Large Intestine. Abdominal pain after evacuation is normally due to Spleen-Qi deficiency.



CLINICAL NOTE

- Points for constipation: ST-25 Tianshu, SP-15 Daheng on the left, BL-25 Dachangshu.
- Points for diarrhoea: ST-25 Tianshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, BL-25 Dachangshu.
- Points for abdominal pain and distension: G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, ST-39 Xiajuxu, ST-25 Tianshu.

Case History

A 22-year-old woman had been suffering from constipation and abdominal distension and pain for the past 2 years. The abdominal pain was alleviated by the bowel movement. Her complexion was dull, pale and sallow. She also complained of a gradual hair loss on the top of the head, dizziness and itchy skin.

She had been on the contraceptive pill for a long time having come off it the previous year. Her periods failed to return after stopping the contraceptive pill and were only recently beginning to return, albeit with an irregular cycle.

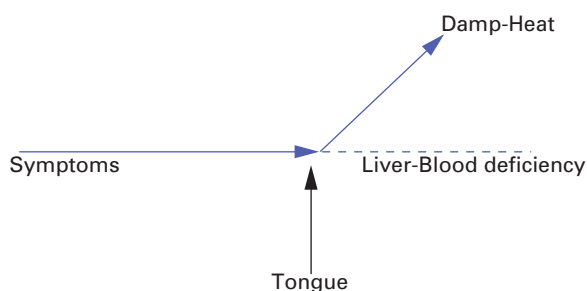


Figure 31.2. Determining importance of tongue in diagnosis.

Her tongue was slightly Red on the sides and had a fairly thick, sticky-yellow coating and her pulse was Slippery and slightly Wiry.

Diagnosis

This case history is reported here mostly as an example of the importance of the pulse and tongue in diagnosis. In fact, her presenting symptoms clearly reflect Liver-Blood deficiency (gradual loss of hair on top, dizziness, dull, sallow complexion, itchy skin, irregular periods) and Liver-Qi stagnation (abdominal distension and pain). However, the tongue and pulse introduce a completely different dimension to this case history, clearly revealing the presence of Damp-Heat manifested by the redness on the sides of the tongue and sticky-yellow coating and by the Slippery quality of the pulse (the pulse is also slightly Wiry due to Liver-Qi stagnation) (Fig. 31.2).

The condition of Damp-Heat revealed by the pulse and tongue adds to and partially corrects the initial diagnosis; in fact, the alleviation of abdominal pain after the bowel movement confirms the presence of Damp-Heat, which is a 'solid' pathogenic factor that is, so to speak, 'expelled' by the bowel movement. In contrast, abdominal pain due to Liver-Qi stagnation does not usually improve with bowel movement.

The pulse and tongue led me to ask further questions which I would not have otherwise asked, to confirm or exclude the presence of Damp-Heat; on questioning she confirmed that the abdominal pain was accompanied by a pronounced feeling of fullness and heaviness, which are typical of Dampness.

2. URINE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 54](#)

With regard to urination we should ask about the following aspects systematically:

- Frequency
- Colour
- Amount
- Difficulty in micturition
- Cloudiness
- Incontinence
- Urination at night
- Pain
- Smell.

The urination gives a good indication of the Hot or Cold nature of the condition and also of the state of Kidneys and Bladder.

a) Frequency

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#)

As a general principle, enuresis or incontinence of urine is usually due to Deficiency conditions, whereas retention of urine is generally due to a Full condition, but there are exceptions to this rule. For example, a severe Deficiency of Qi of the Lungs and Spleen in the elderly may lead to urine retention.

Frequent urination is generally due to Kidney-Yang deficiency, in which case the urine is pale and abundant; if it is frequent but scanty, it indicates Spleen- and Kidney-Qi deficiency.

Nocturnal enuresis in children is due to either a constitutional Kidney deficiency or Liver-Fire; in the first instance the child will be quiet and listless, whereas in the case of Liver-Fire the child will be vivacious and prone to fits of anger.



CLINICAL NOTE

Frequent urination from Kidney-Yang deficiency: BL-23 Shenshu, BL-28 Pangguangshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan with direct moxa.

b) Colour

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

The colour of the urine gives a good indication of the Hot and Cold condition of the patient. Normal urine is pale-yellow. Pale urine indicates Cold in the Bladder or Kidney-Yang deficiency; dark urine indicates Heat in the Bladder or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

It should be remembered that the colour of the urine is affected when the person drinks a lot of water (becoming paler than it would otherwise be) and also when

the person takes vitamin B, which makes the urine bright-yellow.

Blood in the urine indicates Qi deficiency (of the Spleen and Kidneys), Heat in the Bladder or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Very dark urine, like soya sauce, indicates a kidney disease such as kidney failure or glomerulonephritis.

COLOUR OF URINE

- Pale: Cold in the Bladder or Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Dark: Heat in the Bladder or Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Red (with blood): Qi deficiency, Heat in the Bladder or Kidney-Yin deficiency

c) Amount

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

Copious urination indicates Kidney-Yang deficiency; scanty urination indicates Kidney-Yin deficiency or Heat in the Bladder unless it is due to profuse sweating, repeated vomiting or severe diarrhoea. If the urination is scanty but also frequent, it is normally due to Spleen- and Kidney-Qi deficiency. Copious, clear and pale urination during an exterior invasion of Wind indicates that the pathogenic factor has not penetrated into the Interior (if it had, the urine would be dark).



Remember: scanty urination in middle-aged or elderly men may be due to a swelling of the prostate which may be benign or malignant.

d) Difficulty in micturition

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#)

Retention of urine from Full patterns may be due to Dampness obstructing the urinary passages, to Blood stasis in the Bladder or to urinary stones. Retention of urine from Empty patterns may be due to Kidney-Yang deficiency, Kidney-Yin deficiency or a deficiency of the Lungs; all these patterns occur mostly in the elderly.

Difficulty in urination (meaning that the micturition is difficult or that it may stop and start) is usually due to Dampness obstructing the urinary passages; a slight difficulty in urination also may be due to Spleen- and Kidney-Qi deficiency. In the elderly, it may be due to Kidney-Yang deficiency; in rare cases, it may be due to Lung-Qi deficiency.

e) Cloudiness

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

Turbid urine indicates Dampness in the urinary passages. Urine with small flakes of mucus indicates Damp-Heat in the Bladder.

f) Incontinence

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#)

Incontinence of urine is always due to a deficiency of the Kidneys and sinking of Kidney-Qi; it is common in the elderly and in women after childbirth or after a hysterectomy.

Dribbling of urine after urination indicates Kidney-Qi not firm.

g) Urination at night

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#)

Urinating at night indicates Kidney-Yang deficiency. This is due to deficient Yang not controlling Yin at night and therefore fluids leaking out in urination.



Remember: urination at night is caused by a deficiency of Kidney-Yang, rather than Kidney-Yin.

h) Pain

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#)

Pain and hypogastric distension before urination indicate Liver-Qi stagnation; burning pain during urination indicates Damp-Heat in the Bladder; a dull ache after urination indicates Kidney-Qi deficiency.

i) Smell

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 73](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 54](#)

Absence of smell is either normal or indicates Cold in the Bladder. A strong smell indicates Damp-Heat in the Bladder, and a sweet smell may indicate diabetes.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how to ask about stools and urine.
- The systematic approach to bowel questioning: frequency, consistency, shape, colour, odour and sounds, and abdominal pain related to evacuation.
- The systematic approach to urine questioning: frequency, colour, amount, difficulty in passing, cloudiness, incontinence, nocturia, pain and odour.

32 Thirst and Drink

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask

When we ask

How we ask

Thirst

Dry mouth

Preference for hot or cold drinks

Absence of thirst

Case History

WHY we ask

The symptom of thirst (or its absence) reflects the state of the Body Fluids. There are two types of fluid, one called *Jin* and the other called *Ye*. The *Jin* fluids are clear, light and watery, and they circulate with the Defensive Qi in the space between skin and muscles; sweat comes from these fluids. The *Ye* fluids are more dense and heavy, and they moisten and lubricate the joint spaces and the sense organs. Saliva is an expression of these *Ye* fluids; dryness of the mouth or thirst (these are not the same thing) are therefore symptoms of deficiency of such fluids, either because they are burned by Heat or Empty Heat or because there is not enough Yin.

The organ involved most closely with thirst and dry mouth is the Stomach, but the Kidneys also exert an influence on saliva. However, Heat or Empty Heat of any organ may cause thirst or a dry mouth.

WHEN we ask

During the time I have been practising, I have never had a patient seek treatment for a problem related to thirst (although in China patients recognize problems related to thirst as being indicative of an imbalance that

needs to be treated). However, I will ask almost every patient I see whether he or she feels particularly thirsty, has a dry mouth, etc. I usually do this after I have asked about food and appetite or when I am trying to establish the Hot or Cold nature of a condition.

I specifically ask about thirst in conditions in which a patient has apparent *symptoms* of Heat but I suspect does not actually have Heat. For example, in cases of rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel, a woman may have a feeling of heat of the face and a red face, but no thirst because there is no actual Heat.

HOW we ask

For cultural reasons, thirst and dry mouth are two symptoms Chinese patients are very aware of; Western patients are somewhat less aware of these symptoms and seldom report them spontaneously. An added difficulty in the West is that many people force themselves to drink very frequently in the mistaken belief that this is a beneficial habit that '*flushes the kidneys*'. As a result of this habit, such people will seldom feel thirsty even if they suffer from Heat.

An added difficulty in England is that tea consumption is very high and this would also stop people from feeling thirsty. The same applies to countries where coffee consumption is high. In the United States, people also tend to drink a lot in general (including water and soda). As a result of these factors, fewer patients will report feeling thirsty than is the case in China, even though they do suffer from Heat.

Generally speaking, the preference for hot or cold drinks reflects a condition of Cold or Heat of the Stomach, respectively. However, this diagnostic symptom may be rendered invalid by cultural habits in Western countries and especially in the United States, where the consumption of iced drinks is very widespread.

The following symptoms concerning thirst are discussed:

1. Thirst
2. Dry mouth
3. Preference for hot or cold drinks
4. Absence of thirst

1. THIRST

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 70](#)

Generally speaking, thirst indicates Heat, which may be either Full Heat or Empty Heat. Thirst is not the same as dry mouth, as the former usually reflects Heat while the latter reflects Yin deficiency.

Full Heat causes intense thirst with desire to drink cold fluids. Full Heat of any organ can cause this symptom, especially Stomach-Heat, Lung-Heat, Liver-Fire and Heart-Fire.

Empty Heat causes thirst with desire to drink in small sips, especially in the evening or during the night. This symptom is caused particularly by Empty Heat of the Stomach, Lungs, Kidneys or Heart.

A particular symptom in Chinese diagnosis is that of 'thirst without desire to drink'. This symptom may seem strange, but it does occur and Western patients do occasionally report it even spontaneously. Damp-Heat

causes thirst but without desire to drink; this is because Heat causes the thirst, but Dampness, obstructing the Middle Burner, makes the patient reluctant to drink.

Thirst with desire to drink but immediately followed by vomiting of fluids indicates Phlegm-Heat.

In rare cases, a mild thirst with desire to sip fluids may be due to severe, chronic Qi deficiency. This is the result of the deficient Qi not transporting the fluids to the mouth and causing thirst.

Intense thirst with profuse urination may indicate diabetes.

[Table 32.1](#) summarizes the types of thirst.

THIRST

Yin deficiency: dry mouth

Full Heat: intense thirst with desire to drink cold fluids

Empty Heat: thirst with desire to drink in small sips, especially in the evening or during the night

Damp-Heat: thirst without desire to drink

Phlegm-Heat: thirst with desire to drink but immediately followed by vomiting of fluids

Cold: desire to drink warm liquids

Blood stasis: thirst without desire to drink, desire to gargle without swallowing

Severe, chronic Qi deficiency: mild thirst with desire to sip fluids

Diabetes: intense thirst with profuse urination

Table 32.1 Types of thirst

Thirst	Pathology	Pattern
Absence of thirst	Body Fluids not impaired	Cold or normal
Intense thirst with desire to drink copious amounts of cold water	Body Fluids consumed by Heat	Full Heat (Liver, Heart, Lungs, Stomach)
Thirst with desire to drink in small sips	Fluids consumed by Empty Heat	Empty Heat (Stomach, Kidneys, Heart, Lungs)
Thirst with no desire to drink	Heat causes thirst, but Dampness obstructs Middle Burner so that the patient has no desire to drink	Damp-Heat
Thirst, vomiting after drinking	Heat causes thirst, but Phlegm obstructs Middle Burner, which causes vomiting	Phlegm-Heat
Thirst with no desire to drink, desire to gargle without swallowing	Blood and Fluids interchange, Blood stasis causes obstruction of Fluids so that the patient has no desire to drink	Blood stasis
Intense thirst and frequent urination		Diabetes (type I)

2. DRY MOUTH

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 70](#)

Yin deficiency causes a dry mouth, rather than thirst, especially in the afternoon or evening; also in this case the patient likes to drink in small sips.

Although not common, a dry mouth also may be due to severe, chronic Blood stasis, in which case there also would be a desire to gargle with fluids without swallowing.



A dry mouth may be caused by Yin deficiency, rather than Heat. In this case, it would get worse in the afternoon and evening.

3. PREFERENCE FOR HOT OR COLD DRINKS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 70](#)

A patient's preference for hot or cold drinks reflects the Cold or Hot nature of the patient's condition, especially with regards to the Stomach. Stomach-Cold will cause a patient to prefer warm drinks, while Stomach-Heat will cause a patient to desire cold drinks.

A desire to drink warm or hot liquids does not count as 'thirst', and it indicates a Cold pattern of the Stomach which also may include Cold-Dampness.

4. ABSENCE OF THIRST

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 70](#)

Although 'absence of thirst' is not a symptom as such, it is considered in Chinese medicine because it has a particular diagnostic significance. Absence of thirst, that is, if the patient seldom feels thirsty and never has the desire to drink, indicates a Cold pattern; obviously, this symptom is elicited on interrogation as a patient will not normally report it spontaneously.

Case History

A 51-year-old woman had been suffering from type II, late-onset diabetes which had been diagnosed only 7 weeks before. The first manifestations of it were thirst, frequent urination, vaginal itching and irritation and extreme tiredness. The onset of the diabetes coincided with the stopping of her periods, during which time she suffered from hot flushes, night-sweating, urination at night, disturbed sleep, dry eyes and throat at night with desire to sip water and what she described as 'a feeling of adrenalin rushing up and around the chest'. She was overweight, her voice was quite loud and she was generally lively. Her complexion was quite flushed.

Diagnosis

The red complexion and the symptoms she developed after the stoppage of her periods clearly indicate Heat or Empty Heat. However, this case is an example of a striking contradiction between the symptoms and the tongue: in fact, her tongue was Pale and Swollen. In order to confirm or exclude the presence of Cold or Yang deficiency as manifested by the tongue, I asked about cold feeling and she did confirm that, although she felt hot at night, she also experienced very cold feet and needed to wear socks in bed. This contradiction is very common, especially in women of menopausal age, and it simply indicates that there is a deficiency of both Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang. The deficiency of the Kidneys was also confirmed by the fact that she suffered from chronic lower backache. The symptom of frequent urination experienced with the onset of her diabetes also confirms the Kidney deficiency, and it is not by chance that the diabetes developed when her periods stopped and the Kidney energy declined.

Her pulse was Deep, slightly Slippery, Weak on both Rear positions and relatively Overflowing on the Heart position. The Deep and Weak pulse on both Rear positions confirms the Kidney deficiency, while the Slippery quality indicates the presence of Phlegm, which is confirmed by her being overweight. The relatively Overflowing quality of the Heart pulse is common in menopausal women and, rather than indicating an actual Heart pattern, reflects a rising of Qi towards the top of the body due to the deficiency of the Kidneys below. It is this rising of Qi that causes

the hot flushes and in her case, also the peculiar symptom of *'a feeling of adrenalin rushing up and around the chest'*.

The treatment principle in this case is to tonify the Kidneys, strengthen the Penetrating and Directing Vessels, tonify the Spleen and resolve Phlegm.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how to ask about thirst and drink.
- The clinical significance of thirst, or absence of, and dry mouth.

33

Energy Levels

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask

When we ask

How we ask

Historical background

Patterns causing tiredness

Case histories

This is not one of the traditional 10 questions of Chinese diagnosis. I have added it to the list of questions because tiredness is one of the most common symptoms reported by Western patients. In my practice, about 12% of patients seek treatment specifically and only for tiredness; to these should be added all the other patients who come for other symptoms or diseases but who also suffer from chronic tiredness.

WHY we ask

It is always essential to ask about level of energy and tiredness because it is such a common complaint; indeed, it is often the main reason patients seek treatment.

WHEN we ask

I generally ask about tiredness quite early during the interrogation and as soon as I suspect a Deficiency pattern.

HOW we ask

This is generally quite straightforward, and I usually ask whether they ‘feel unusually tired’ or whether they ‘lack energy’. However, when a patient reports feeling very tired, it is important to enquire about the patient’s lifestyle. Many people have unrealistic expectations about their level of energy. If people in industrialized societies work too much and for far too many hours, a feeling of tiredness is entirely normal. For example, it is not uncommon for someone to get up at 6 am, leave home at 6.30 to catch a train, work the whole day under hectic

conditions (having a sandwich at the desk for ‘lunch’) and return home at 9 in the evening; such a schedule is precisely what constitutes ‘overwork’ in Chinese medicine.

Our level of energy also depends on age; again, very many people have unrealistic expectations about their desired level of energy and are surprised that they cannot do at 55 what they did when they were 25.

The chapter will be articulated into the following headings:

1. Historical background
2. Patterns causing tiredness

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There is no Chinese disease-symptom category called ‘tiredness’, but there is one called ‘Exhaustion’ (*Xu Lao* or *Xu Sun*). The term *Xu Lao* describes not only a symptom – that is, ‘tiredness’ (*lao*) – but also its pathology: a deficiency of the body’s Qi (*xu*). The term *Xu Lao* was introduced in the ‘Prescriptions of the Golden Chest’ for the first time. It says in [Chapter 6](#): ‘*When the pulse is big but empty in male patients, it indicates extreme exhaustion from over-exertion.*’¹

The ‘Discussion on the Causes and Symptoms of Diseases’ (*Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun*, AD 610) by Chao Yuan Fang elaborates on the concept of Exhaustion by investigating its causes. Dr Chao considers Exhaustion to be due to the ‘6 Excesses’ (over-exertion leading to depletion of Qi, Blood, Sinews, Bones, Muscles and Essence) and the ‘7 Injuries’. The ‘7 Injuries’ refer to the damage inflicted on the Internal Organs by various excesses, such as:

- overeating injuring the Spleen
- prolonged anger injuring the Liver
- lifting excessive weights or sitting on damp ground injuring the Kidneys
- exposure to cold and drinking cold liquids injuring the Lungs

- exposure to wind, rain, cold and heat injuring the body
 - worry, sadness and pensiveness injuring the Heart
 - wind, rain, cold and Summer-Heat injuring the body.²
- The 'Simple Questions' in Chapter 23 lists five causes of Exhaustion:

- excessive use of the eyes injuring the Heart
- excessive lying down injuring the Lungs
- excessive sitting injuring the Spleen
- excessive standing injuring the Kidneys
- excessive exercise injuring the Liver.³

Over the centuries various doctors discussed the treatment of Exhaustion according to their particular views and emphases. For example, Li Dong Yuan, author of the famous 'Discussion on Stomach and Spleen' (*Pi Wei Lun*, 1249), considered Stomach and Spleen deficiency to be the main cause of Exhaustion. Zhu Dan Xi, author of 'Secrets of Dan Xi' (*Dan Xi Xin Fa*, 1347), placed the emphasis on Kidney-Yin and Liver-Yin deficiency as a cause of Exhaustion and advocated nourishing Yin and clearing Heat.

Dr Zhu indicated the Spleen and Lungs as the two main organs to treat in cases of chronic tiredness, the Spleen for Yang deficiency and the Lungs for Yin deficiency. Each of these can eventually lead to Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency and Yang-deficiency can lead to Yin-deficiency or vice versa. Dr Zhu says: '*To treat Deficiency there are two interconnected systems: either the Lungs or the Spleen. Every [Deficiency] disease boils down to Yang or Yin deficiency. Yang deficiency can lead to Yin deficiency after a prolonged time ... Yin deficiency can lead to Yang deficiency after a prolonged time ... In Yang deficiency treat the Spleen, in Yin deficiency treat the Lungs.*'⁴

Zhang Jie Bin, author of the 'Classic of Categories' (*Lei Jing*, 1624) and the 'Complete Book of Jing Yue' (*Jing Yue Quan Shu*, 1624), advocated tonifying the Kidneys for the treatment of Exhaustion. Zhu Qi Shi (1463–1539) considered the Lungs, Spleen and Kidneys to be the three most important organs to treat in Exhaustion. He said in his book 'Discussion on Exhaustion' (*Xu Lao Lun*): '*To treat Exhaustion there are three roots: Lungs, Spleen and Kidneys. Lungs are like the 'heaven' of the internal organs, the Spleen is like the 'mother' of the body and the Kidneys are like the 'root' of life. Treat these three organs to treat Exhaustion.*'⁵

Thus, tiredness is included in the concept of Exhaustion, although the latter is a more serious condition than simple tiredness. However, although Exhaustion contemplates only Deficiency causes, tiredness may be

due to Full causes; Dampness, Phlegm and Qi stagnation are common causes of tiredness.

2. PATTERNS CAUSING TIREDNESS

A chronic feeling of tiredness is usually due to a deficiency. This may be a deficiency of Qi, Yang, Blood or Yin. In some cases, tiredness also may be due to a Full condition and especially Dampness, Phlegm or Qi stagnation.

The pulse is an important sign to differentiate Full from Empty types of tiredness: if the pulse is Full in general (often Slippery or Wiry), it indicates that the tiredness is caused by a Full condition (usually Dampness, Phlegm or Qi stagnation).



Remember: tiredness is not always due to a condition of Deficiency. It can be, and it often is, due to a Full condition.

Dampness and Phlegm are 'heavy' and weigh down the body so that the person feels heavy and tired. Qi stagnation also may make a person feel tired; this is not because there is not enough Qi but because, being stagnant, Qi does not circulate properly. This situation is more common in men and often reflects a state of mental depression. The classic example would be that of a man who seeks treatment primarily for tiredness and whose pulse and tongue reveal no deficiency at all but only a severe Qi stagnation, with the pulse being very Wiry and Full on all positions and the tongue being Red on the sides. In such a situation the man feels tired from Qi stagnation and his tiredness is closely linked to a state of mental depression (itself often deriving from repressed anger).

Chronic tiredness associated with a desire to lie down, poor appetite and loose stools indicates Spleen-Qi deficiency, which is probably the most common cause of it. If Cold symptoms are present, it is due to Spleen-Yang deficiency.

Chronic tiredness associated with a weak voice and a propensity to catching colds indicates Lung-Qi deficiency; if there are Cold symptoms, it is due to Lung-Yang deficiency.

Chronic tiredness associated with backache, lassitude, a feeling of cold, depression and frequent urination indicates Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Chronic tiredness associated with slight depression, dizziness and scanty periods indicates Liver-Blood deficiency.

Chronic tiredness associated with anxiety, insomnia, a dry mouth at night and a tongue without coating is due to Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Chronic tiredness associated with a feeling of heaviness of the body and muzziness of the head indicates retention of Dampness.

Chronic tiredness associated with a feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness and muzziness of the head indicates retention of Phlegm.

Chronic tiredness in an anxious and tense person with a Wiry pulse indicates stagnation of Liver-Qi.

Short-term tiredness with alternating cold and hot feeling, irritability, unilateral tongue coating and a Wiry pulse indicates the Lesser Yang pattern (either of the 6 Stages or of the 4 Levels).

TIREDNESS

- Spleen-Qi or Spleen-Yang deficiency
- Lung-Qi or Lung-Yang deficiency
- Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Liver-Blood deficiency
- Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Dampness
- Phlegm
- Liver-Qi stagnation

Case History

A 56-year-old woman complained of extreme tiredness for the past 3 years since the death of her husband. She said her legs 'felt like lead' and she had no motivation to do all the things that needed to be done in the house. She had been suffering from insomnia, also since her husband's death. She said *'I feel pain inside but the tears don't come'*. As she is stoically trying to live through her pain without crying, her grief and depression probably are somatized more, causing more physical symptoms.

Apart from these two main problems, she had been suffering from occipital headaches since the birth of her second child 26 years before. On interrogation, it transpired that she also experienced dizziness, hot flushes, urination at night and abdominal distension and heaviness.

Her tongue was slightly Red, Stiff, dry, with a sticky coating and a Heart crack; her pulse was Slippery on the right, Floating-Empty on the left and Weak and Deep on the left-Rear position.

Diagnosis

This is a complex combination of patterns, but the overwhelming factor is the obvious grief and depression following the death of her husband. The symptom she first complained of was 'tiredness', but as she went on talking, it was obvious that this was due to a deep depression following the grief caused by her husband's death, hence the lack of motivation and insomnia.

From the point of view of patterns, there is obviously a deficiency of Kidney-Yin evidenced by the urination at night; the headaches stemming from the second birth; the dizziness; the hot flushes; the Red, Stiff and dry tongue; the Floating-Empty quality of the pulse on the left and Weak-Deep Kidney pulse on the left. Accompanying the Kidney-Yin deficiency there is Heart-Yin deficiency causing the insomnia and manifesting with the deep Heart crack. In addition to these conditions, there is also some Dampness evidenced by the abdominal distension and heaviness and by the sticky tongue coating.

Case History

An 18-year-old girl had been suffering from tiredness and lassitude for the previous 9 months; this came on gradually and was accompanied by recurrent sore throats, temporal headaches, a feeling of heaviness, dizziness, a feeling of muzziness of the head, blurred vision, phlegm in the throat and an alternation of hot and cold feeling.

Her tongue was slightly Red on the sides, with red points on the right side, and her pulse was generally Wiry.

Diagnosis

This is a very clear example of the Lesser-Yang pattern, not from the 6 Stages, but from the Qi level of the 4 Levels (called 'Gall-Bladder Heat'). The Gall-Bladder Heat pattern from the 4 Levels differs from the Lesser-Yang pattern of the 6 Stages in so far as it is characterized by more Heat than Cold and by the presence of Phlegm. This patient's symptoms clearly confirm this, as the red points on the right side of the tongue indicate that there is more Heat and the feeling of heaviness, the feeling of muzziness of the head and the phlegm in the throat indicate the presence of Phlegm.

This is also a good example of tiredness caused not by a Deficiency but by Heat.

Case History

A 54-year-old man complained of chronic tiredness and lassitude; this was his main presenting complaint. During the interrogation very few other symptoms emerged; in fact the only other symptom of note was the presence of loose stools. There were no other symptoms of Spleen deficiency nor of a Kidney deficiency. This patient looked very quiet and subdued, spoke with a very low voice and walked rather slowly; his facial complexion was quite red.

His tongue was Reddish-Purple in general, especially on the right side, and had a Red tip. His pulse was Wiry in general.

Diagnosis

This is an example of a situation in which the demeanour of the patient contradicts the pulse and tongue. His slow walk, low voice and quiet demeanour all indicate a deficiency, while the tongue and pulse clearly indicate the presence of a Full condition. This is also an example in which, in the absence of many symptoms, the tongue and pulse become even more important than usual. His tongue indicates Liver-Blood stasis (because it is more Purple on the right side), and his pulse confirms this. Liver-Blood stasis nearly always develops from chronic Liver-Qi stagnation, and we can therefore assume this patient has been suffering from Liver-Qi stagnation for a long time. The most common cause of Liver-Qi stagnation is an emotional problem related to anger, resentment or frustration. In this case, therefore, the chronic tiredness is due not to a Deficiency but to a Fullness. The symptom of loose stools, which normally indicates Spleen-Qi deficiency, may be here due to stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen. Thus, although this patient complains primarily of tiredness, it is obvious that he also suffers from mental depression.

Case History

A 39-year-old man had been suffering from extreme tiredness for many years; the tiredness was accompanied by a feeling of weakness of the limbs and was worse in the morning. When asked whether the tiredness was accompanied by a feeling of heaviness, he said that it was, but only during an acute respiratory infection. He was also prone to frequent colds and upper respiratory tract infections which affected his sinuses every time,

causing a congested feeling in the face and a sticky nasal discharge.

Ten years previously he had been experiencing very poor digestion and frequent bouts of diarrhoea and had been diagnosed as suffering from coeliac disease (from which his father also suffered), and he improved considerably by avoiding gluten. However, he still suffered from an alternation of bouts of loose stools and constipation. On interrogation it transpired that his mouth and lips were frequently dry.

His body type clearly belonged to the Wood element, being tall and thin, but he walked in a slow and slightly awkward way which did not fit in with the Wood body type. He looked fairly relaxed and placid, and he spoke slowly and with a soft voice. His complexion was dull-pale yellow, but his eyelids, especially the upper ones, were rather red.

His tongue was Red on the sides in the Spleen area, Swollen and had a yellow coating. His pulse was generally Slippery.

Diagnosis

There are clear manifestations of Spleen-Qi deficiency, that is, the tiredness, the feeling of weakness, being prone to frequent colds, the tendency to loose stools and the dull-pale yellow complexion; the history of coeliac disease (affecting his father as well) indicates that he most probably suffered from a constitutional Spleen deficiency. The Spleen deficiency had obviously given rise to Dampness, which is manifesting with the sinus congestion, the feeling of heaviness during acute infections and the Slippery pulse.

There is a third, rather uncommon pattern, Spleen-Heat, which is causing the tendency to constipation, the dry mouth and dry lips and manifests on the tongue with a Red colour on the sides in the Spleen areas and a yellow coating.

The contrast between his body type, which pertains to Wood, and his prevailing disharmony in the Earth element is a poor prognostic sign; it is better for a Wood type to suffer from a Wood disharmony.

Case History

A 49-year-old man had been suffering from tiredness and palpitations for the past 18 months. He also complained of irritability and said that all his symptoms became worse in the afternoon.

In the few weeks before the consultation, he had developed a burning sensation on urination. This was a recurrence of a symptom that he had suffered from previously.

His tongue was Swollen, and the sides were Red. His pulse was Wiry and Slow.

Diagnosis

In this case, the overall Wiry nature of the pulse points towards the fact that the tiredness is caused by Liver-Qi stagnation rather than a deficiency condition. Liver-Qi stagnation is also, of course, the reason the patient often feels irritable. The stagnation has led to some Heat, which is shown on the Red sides of the tongue and is causing the burning sensation on urination. The Slow quality of the pulse may seem to contradict the symptoms of heat, but it is due to the long-standing stagnation of Liver-Qi.

Case History

A 13-year-old boy had been suffering from headaches, night-sweating, weakness and tiredness for 3 weeks. These symptoms had an acute onset in springtime; before that his health and energy were good. On closer questioning, his weakness consisted mostly of a feeling of weary limbs. He also complained of an epigastric discomfort which he found difficult to describe, saying it was like 'a feeling of hunger' and he could not decide whether it was hunger or pain. This was accompanied by a feeling of nausea. In addition, he experienced ache in the joints, especially of the legs, dizziness, restless sleep and irritability.

His tongue was very slightly Red on the sides and had a sticky-white coating. His pulse was Slippery-Wiry-Rapid (92 beats/min).

Diagnosis

The essential feature of this boy's condition is its acute onset. If we analyse his symptoms in isolation, many different patterns would emerge: Damp-Heat in the joints (ache in the joints), Liver-Yang rising (headaches, irritability, dizziness), Yin deficiency (night-sweating, epigastric discomfort with feeling of hunger), Spleen-Qi deficiency (weakness, tiredness, weary limbs) and Stomach-Qi not descending (nausea). However, if we take the sudden onset into account and consider the symptoms in their totality, it becomes apparent that this problem is caused by the emergence of Latent

Heat in springtime. In this case, Latent Heat manifests as Damp-Heat.

Latent Heat occurs when an external pathogenic factor invades the body (in theory in winter, but it can happen in any season) without causing apparent symptoms at the time; the pathogenic factor goes into the Interior, turns into Heat and "lurks" in the Interior to emerge later with a sudden onset in springtime. When it emerges, Latent Heat manifests with symptoms of Interior Heat but with an acute onset; in this boy's case the symptoms of Heat are insomnia, restless sleep, irritability, night-sweating, feeling of hunger, Red sides of the tongue and Rapid pulse. The symptoms of Damp-Heat are weary limbs, ache in the joints, sticky tongue coating and Slippery pulse.

Although the symptoms appear quite complex, the treatment is relatively simple and it should consist in clearing Heat and resolving Damp with a prescription such as Lian Po Yin *Coptis-Magnolia Decoction*.

Case History

A 20-year-old woman had been suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome for 3 years. Her symptoms were extreme fatigue, swollen glands, a mild, intermittent sore throat, a feeling of tightness of the chest, ache in the muscles, a feeling of muzziness of the head, dizziness, a feeling of heaviness, an alternating feeling of heat and cold, headaches on the temples, blurred vision, tinnitus, thirst, a sticky taste, loose stools and fits of crying. She suffered an acute and severe attack of glandular fever (mononucleosis) when she was 16 which confined her to bed for a long time. On further questioning, she also said that she felt like "a pulsation" in the chest and epigastrium and that she suffered from insomnia.

Her tongue was Red in general and slightly Swollen with a sticky coating and her pulse was Slippery and Rapid (92 beats/min).

Diagnosis

There are two main patterns emerging from the numerous symptoms and signs. The first is residual Damp-Heat following the original acute attack of glandular fever, and the second is the pattern of Gall-Bladder Heat of the Qi level within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels. The Gall-Bladder Heat pattern of the Qi level is equivalent to the Lesser Yang pattern of the Six Stages, the main difference

being that it is characterized by more Heat and some Dampness.

The symptoms and signs of Damp-Heat are extreme fatigue, swollen glands, ache in the muscles, intermittent sore throat, feeling of muzziness, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, thirst, loose stools, a feeling of pulsation in the chest and epigastrium, insomnia, Swollen and Red tongue with sticky coating and Slippery-Rapid pulse. Some of these symptoms are related to the actual Dampness and some to Heat. The symptoms and signs of the Gall-Bladder Heat pattern are alternation of feeling of heat and cold, headaches on the temples, dizziness, blurred vision, tinnitus, insomnia and a Rapid pulse.

Case History

A 50-year-old woman had been suffering from type II, late-onset diabetes which had been diagnosed only 7 weeks before. The first manifestations of it were thirst, frequent urination, vaginal itching and irritation and extreme tiredness. The onset of the diabetes coincided with the stopping of her periods, during which time she suffered from hot flushes, night-sweating, urination at night, disturbed sleep, dry eyes and throat at night with desire to sip water and what she described as '*a feeling of adrenalin rushing up and around the chest*'. She was overweight, her voice was quite loud and she was generally lively. Her complexion was quite flushed.

Diagnosis

The red complexion and the symptoms she developed after the stoppage of her periods clearly indicate Heat or Empty Heat. However, this case is an example of a striking contradiction between the symptoms and the tongue: in fact, her tongue was Pale and Swollen. In order to confirm or exclude the presence of Cold or Yang deficiency as manifested by the tongue, I asked about cold feeling and she did confirm that, although she felt hot at night, she also experienced very cold feet and needed to wear socks in bed. This contradiction is very common, especially in women of menopausal age, and it simply indicates that there is a deficiency of both Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang. The deficiency of the Kidneys was also confirmed by the fact that she

suffered from chronic lower backache. The symptom of frequent urination experienced with the onset of her diabetes also confirms the Kidney deficiency, and it is not by chance that the diabetes developed when her periods stopped and the Kidney energy declined.

Her pulse was Deep, slightly Slippery, Weak on both Rear positions and relatively Overflowing on the Heart position. The Deep and Weak pulse on both Rear positions confirms the Kidney deficiency, and the Slippery quality indicates the presence of Phlegm, which is confirmed by her being overweight. The relatively Overflowing quality of the Heart pulse is common in menopausal women and, rather than indicating an actual Heart pattern, it reflects a rising of Qi towards the top of the body due to the deficiency of the Kidneys below. It is this rising of Qi that causes the hot flushes and, in her case, also the peculiar symptom of '*a feeling of adrenalin rushing up and around the chest*'.

The treatment principle in this case is to tonify the Kidneys, strengthen the Penetrating and Directing Vessels, tonify the Spleen and resolve Phlegm.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how to ask about energy levels.
- The historical background of exhaustion (*Xu Lao* or *Xu Sun*).
- The patterns causing tiredness and the importance of pulse diagnosis to aid pattern differentiation.

END NOTES

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2. Chao Yuan Fang AD 610 Discussion on Causes and Symptoms of Diseases (*Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun* 诸病源候论) cited in Zhang Bo Yu 1986 Chinese Internal Medicine (*Zhong Yi Nei Ke Xue* 中医内科学), Shanghai Science Publishing House, Shanghai, p. 281.
3. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine-Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published c.100 BC, p. 154.
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5. Zhu Qi Shi 1988 Discussion on Exhaustion (*Xu Lao Lun* 虚劳论), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 19. First published c.1520.

34

Head

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Itchy scalp

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Feeling of heat of the head

Fainting

Case history

The head is called the 'Fu of the Bright Essence' because it houses the Brain, which is a manifestation of the Sea of Marrow, and Marrow itself is a manifestation of Essence; as the Essence is stored in the Kidneys, the head is also under the influence of the Kidneys. The hair on the head is nourished by the Kidneys and Qi and Blood in general, and for this reason the hair was said to be the 'abundance of Blood' and the 'glory of the Kidneys'. The head is also called the Meeting of all Yang because all the Yang channels meet in the head, where they either end or begin. The head also houses

the senses and the Yang channels bring to it Clear Yang-Qi, which 'brightens' the senses' orifices and enables a person to have clear sight, hearing, taste and smell.

WHY we ask

It is important to ask about any problems in the head with practically every patient, first because headache and dizziness are such common complaints and second because patients often may forget about some head symptoms unless they are asked. For example, not many patients would volunteer the information of having an itchy scalp or a feeling of heaviness of the head. Problems related to the head often serve to confirm or exclude the presence of Liver patterns (of course not exclusively Liver patterns). For example, the symptoms of itchiness of the scalp in a patient presenting with a possible Liver disharmony would confirm such disharmony, as it may be due to Liver-Blood deficiency, Wind in the skin (also Liver-related), Liver-Fire and Damp-Heat in the Liver channel.

WHEN we ask

Questions about the head are obviously particularly important in patients who suffer from headaches; however, they are also important in the elderly and in those suffering from hypertension or tinnitus. In the elderly they have particular importance because head symptoms such as headache, dizziness, feeling of distension of the head, etc., often occur with serious pathologies such as hypertension or may be prodromal signs of Wind-stroke.

I also ask about head symptoms whenever there is Liver-Qi stagnation or Liver-Blood stasis to check whether there also may be Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire, which tend to cause symptoms in the head. For example, a woman may complain of premenstrual tension characterized by irritability and breast distension. She also may suffer from premenstrual headaches, but she may not relate them to the premenstrual phase. The presence of headaches would confirm that there is Liver-Yang

rising in conjunction with Liver-Qi stagnation; if we did not ask about the headache, we would never know this. This situation arises especially in Liver disharmonies because in such disharmonies, it is common for a patient to suffer from two, three, or even four concomitant Liver patterns.

HOW we ask

I usually ask about any head symptoms whenever this is appropriate during the interrogation. I especially ask about head symptoms whenever a Liver disharmony emerges to check whether there may be Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire.

The following head symptoms will be discussed:

1. Headache
2. Dizziness
3. Feeling of distension of the head
4. Feeling of heaviness of the head
5. Feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head
6. Brain noise
7. Numbness/tingling of the skin of the head
8. Itchy scalp
9. Feeling of cold of the head
10. Feeling of heat of the head
11. Fainting

1. HEADACHE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Headache is one of the most common presenting symptoms in Western patients. Chinese books differentiate first of all between headaches of internal origin and those of external origin, but the latter are not frequently seen in practice.

When asking a patient about headaches it is important to ask systematically about onset, time, location, character of pain and ameliorating or aggravating factors.

a) Onset

A recent onset and short duration indicate headache from exterior invasion of Wind; a gradual onset with long duration indicates headache from interior causes.

b) Time

Headache occurring in daytime usually indicates Qi or Yang deficiency, while headache occurring in the evening

may be due to Blood or Yin deficiency. Headache starting at night during sleep indicates Blood stasis.

c) Location

- Occiput: Greater-Yang channels (can be from exterior invasion of Wind if the pain is severe or from interior Kidney deficiency if the pain is dull) ([Fig. 34.1](#)).
- Forehead: Bright-Yang channels (can be from Stomach-Heat or Blood deficiency) ([Fig. 34.2](#)).
- Temples and sides of the head: Lesser-Yang channels (can be from exterior Wind in the Lesser-Yang or from Liver-Yang rising) ([Fig. 34.3](#)).
- Vertex: terminal Yin channels (usually from deficiency of Liver-Blood) (see [Fig. 34.1](#)).
- Whole head: exterior invasion of Wind-Heat or Kidney deficiency.
- Temple, side of head and eye: Lesser-Yang channels (usually from Liver-Yang rising) ([Fig. 34.4](#)).
- Behind the eyes: Liver channel (either Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Blood deficiency) ([Fig. 34.5](#)).

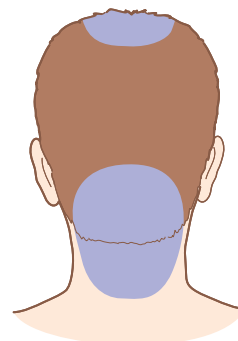


Figure 34.1. Location of occipital and vertex headache.

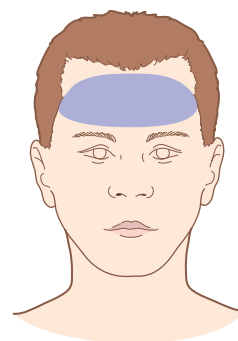


Figure 34.2. Location of frontal headache.

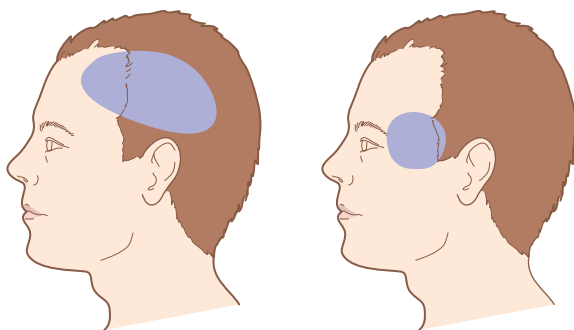


Figure 34.3. Location of Lesser-Yang headache.

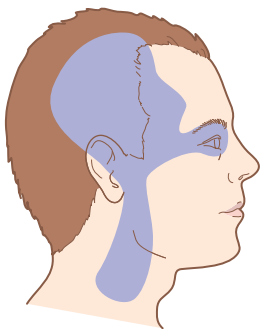


Figure 34.4. Location of Liver-Yang rising headache.

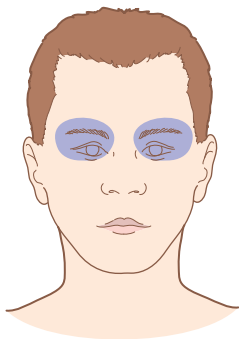


Figure 34.5. Location of headache behind the eyes.

d) Character of pain

A dull ache usually indicates deficiency, while an intense, sharp pain usually indicates excess. A throbbing and distending pain indicates Liver-Yang rising, a pulling pain indicates Liver-Wind and a fixed, boring pain indicates Blood stasis. A dull ache, with the head feeling as if it were wrapped in or full of cotton wool, and a sensation of heaviness indicate Dampness or Phlegm. Headache that is experienced 'inside' the head is usually due to a Kidney deficiency.

e) Ameliorating or aggravating factors

Chronic headaches that are improved by rest are due to a deficiency; if they are improved by exercise, they are due to Liver-Fire, Phlegm or Blood stasis. Headaches aggravated by lying down usually indicate a fullness (Liver-Yang rising, Liver-Fire, Phlegm, Blood stasis), and if they are ameliorated by lying down, they usually indicate a deficiency. Headaches that are improved by eating usually indicate a deficiency; if they are aggravated by eating, they usually indicate an excess, especially Phlegm or retention of food.

The differentiation of headaches is best done by distinguishing headaches of interior origin from those of exterior origin.

f) Headaches of internal origin

In headaches of internal origin, it is very important to differentiate between those deriving from Fullness and those deriving from Emptiness. The most common headaches from Fullness include Liver-Yang rising, Liver-Fire, Phlegm, Blood stasis, Liver-Wind, Stomach-Heat and retention of food. The most common headaches from Emptiness include Blood deficiency, Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency and Kidney deficiency.

The headache from Liver-Yang rising manifests with a throbbing pain, usually unilateral, often moving from side to side and located behind the eye, on the temples or on the lateral side of the head along the Gall-Bladder channel. It is often accompanied by nausea and vomiting, dizziness, blurred vision, flashing lights and a Wiry pulse.

The headache from Liver-Fire, which is less common, is similar in character to that from Liver-Yang rising but is accompanied by Liver-Fire symptoms and signs such as intense thirst, bitter taste, red face, dark urine and dry stools.

Another very common type of headache is that from Phlegm obstructing the clear orifices of the head; in this case the headache is dull and the head feels as if it was wrapped in or full of cotton wool, with a pronounced feeling of heaviness, muzziness and blurred vision. Other manifestations include a feeling of nausea, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a Swollen tongue and a Slippery pulse. However, in my experience, one of the most common types of internal chronic headache is that deriving from a combination of Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm, with the Phlegm being carried upwards by the ascending Liver-Yang.

The headache from Blood stasis is characterized by an intense, fixed, boring pain usually unilateral and accompanied by a Purple tongue and Wiry pulse. In very chronic, long-standing cases of headache, the Blood stasis type of pain often may be combined with other types. The chronic recurrence of a headache in the same part of the head may by itself cause local Blood stasis. For example, if a patient suffers from a Liver-Yang type of headache for many years occurring always on the right side, this may by itself cause a local stasis of Blood in the head on that side and thus the headache will manifest with symptoms of both Liver-Yang rising and Blood stasis.

The headache from Liver-Wind is characterized by a pulling pain, accompanied by severe dizziness and tremors.

The headache from Stomach-Heat is characterized by an intense frontal pain and is accompanied by epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation and a yellow tongue coating.

The headache from retention of food is characterized by a diffused and intense pain on the forehead and accompanied by nausea, vomiting, sour regurgitation, feeling of fullness of the epigastrium, a thick-sticky tongue coating and a Slippery pulse.

The headache from Blood deficiency (usually of the Liver and/or Heart) is characterized by a dull ache, usually on the top of the head, and is accompanied by dizziness, blurred vision, insomnia, palpitations, a Pale tongue and a Choppy pulse.

The headache from Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency is characterized by a dull frontal ache and is accompanied by tiredness, lassitude, weak limbs, loose stools, poor appetite, Pale tongue and Weak pulse.

The headache from Kidney deficiency (which could be Yin or Yang deficiency) is characterized by a dull headache all over the head, accompanied by a feeling of emptiness of the head, dizziness and tinnitus.

g) Headaches of external origin

External headaches are due to invasion of Wind-Cold, Wind-Heat and Wind-Dampness, and they all obviously have an acute onset.

The headache from Wind-Cold is characterized by a severe occipital ache and stiffness and is accompanied by pronounced aversion to cold, fever, sneezing and a Floating-Tight pulse.

The headache from Wind-Heat is characterized by a severe pain, as if the head were being cracked open, and is accompanied by aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, slight sweating and a Floating-Rapid pulse.

The headache from Wind-Dampness is characterized by a dull headache, as if the head were wrapped up, and is accompanied by a feeling of heaviness of the head, aversion to cold, fever, slight sweating, nausea and a Floating-Slippery pulse.

HEADACHES

- Throbbing headache: Liver-Yang rising
- Dull headache with feeling of heaviness: Dampness
- Dull headache with feeling of heaviness and dizziness: Phlegm
- Stabbing, boring headache: Blood stasis
- Headache with pulling pain: Liver-Wind
- Intense, frontal headache: Stomach-Heat
- Severe, dull, frontal headache: retention of food
- Dull headache on vertex: Blood deficiency
- Mild, dull frontal headache: Stomach deficiency
- Headache with feeling of emptiness of the head: Kidney deficiency
- Acute headache with occipital stiffness: external Wind-Cold
- Acute, severe headache: external Wind-Heat
- Acute, severe, dull headache: external Dampness
- Recent onset, short duration: external headache
- Gradual onset, long duration: internal headache
- Headache in daytime: Qi or Yang deficiency
- Headache in the evening: Blood or Yin deficiency
- Headache starting at night: Blood stasis
- Occipital headache: Kidney deficiency or external Wind-Cold
- Frontal headache: Stomach channel
- Headache on temples and sides of the head: Gall-Bladder channel
- Headache behind the eyes: Liver channel
- Headache on vertex: Liver channel
- Headache of whole head: external Wind or Kidney deficiency
- Headache aggravated by lying down: Fullness
- Headache ameliorated by lying down: Deficiency
- Headache better after eating: Deficiency
- Headache worse after eating: Excess

Figure 34.6 illustrates the classification of headaches.

Case History

A 14-year-old girl had been suffering from recurring headaches since the age of 10. The headaches were severe and came approximately every 3 months. The

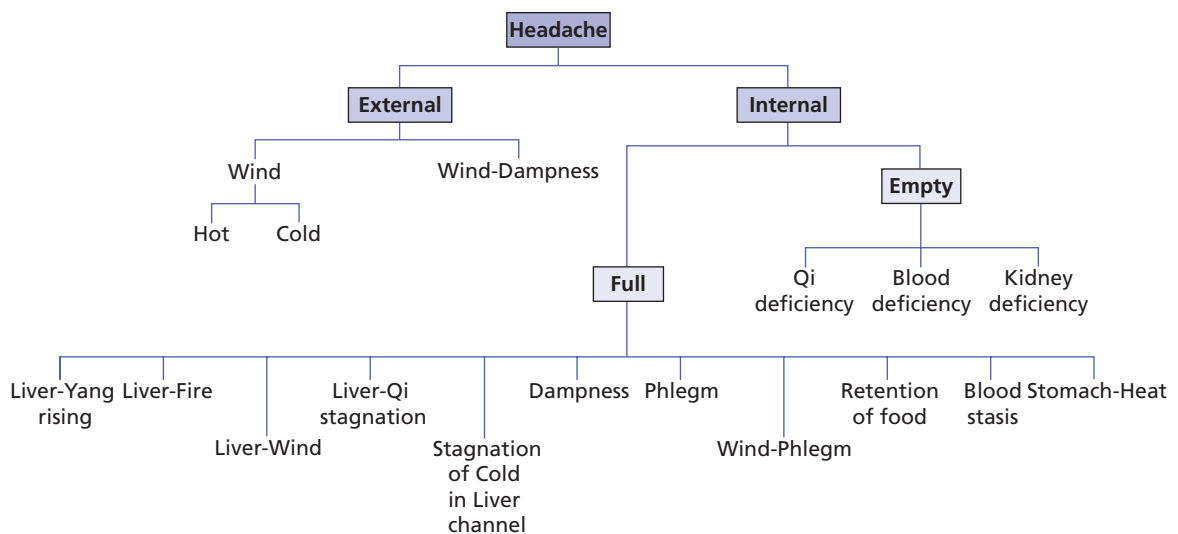


Figure 34.6 Classification of headaches.

headache was concentrated in the area behind the eyes, was throbbing in character and was accompanied by blurred vision, vomiting and what she described as ‘fuzzy eyes’. Apart from the attacks of severe headaches every 3 months, she also experienced frequent, dull headaches in between.

On interrogation, she said she suffered from chronic tiredness and experienced some tingling of her limbs.

Her tongue was Pale, slightly Swollen and had a sticky coating; her pulse was slightly Slippery.

Diagnosis

The headaches are very clearly of the Liver-Yang type, which is confirmed by the throbbing character of the pain, the location behind the eyes and the vomiting. However, there are two other patterns which are evidenced by very few symptoms. First of all, there is some Liver-Blood deficiency, which is indicated by the chronic tiredness, the Pale tongue and the tingling. Liver-Blood deficiency is obviously the cause for the rising of Liver-Yang in this case. Second, there is also some Phlegm; this is evidenced mostly by the tongue (being Swollen and with a sticky coating) and pulse (being Slippery). The ‘fuzzy eyes’ could also be interpreted as a sign of Phlegm obstructing the eye orifices.

This is a good example of the importance of tongue and pulse as pointers to a certain pattern even in the absence of symptoms; for this reason, tongue and pulse pictures should never be discounted when they do not appear to accord with the presenting symptoms.

For example, in this case of Liver-Blood deficiency with Liver-Yang rising, the tongue ‘should’ have been Pale and Thin and the pulse might have been Wiry on the left and Weak on the right. Why should the tongue and pulse show a certain pattern and the patient not show any signs of it? This often happens in young people when there is a certain pathogenic factor (in this case Phlegm) but, due to the young age of the person, it has not given rise to clinical manifestations yet.

The treatment principle in this case should therefore be not only to nourish Liver-Blood and subdue Liver-Yang but also to resolve Phlegm.

Case History

A 28-year-old woman had been suffering from migraine since the age of 13. She was thin, was quite tall and walked with agility; her body shape was a typical Wood type (see [Chapter 1](#)). Her complexion was dull-sallow, her hair was dry and her eyes had good *shen*.

The headaches were of a throbbing character and always occurred on the left side of the head, along the Gall-Bladder channel and behind the left eye; they occurred weekly and nearly always accompanied by nausea, vomiting and photo phobia. The headache was not affected by posture or food intake and, although a headache always occurred with her period, she also suffered from headaches at other times. The headaches were aggravated by damp and windy weather and also by stress and fatigue. A striking feature of the headaches

was that they were markedly better during two pregnancies and markedly worse soon after childbirth both times. She had two children, one 3-year-old and one 6-month-old. An electroencephalogram and computed tomography scan revealed no abnormalities, and drugs for migraine produced an aggravation.

The periods were quite normal, coming regularly, with normal amount and colour but rather painful on the first 2 days. Her general health was good, with no abnormalities in urination or defecation or sleep.

Her tongue was very slightly Pale but Red on the sides, Swollen and with a sticky coating, and there was a small, peeled patch on the left side in the breast area; her pulse was generally Weak and Empty at the deep level.

Diagnosis

Observation of her body type indicates that she is a Wood type; her agile walk accords with this, which is a good sign. As mentioned in [Chapter 1](#), each Five-Element body type has a characteristic walk and a deviation from this is not a good sign. For example, the Wood type should walk in an agile way and if they walked stiffly it would not be a good sign. Her dull complexion and dry hair suggest Blood deficiency; the normal sparkle of her eyes suggested that she did not suffer from any deep emotional problem.

The marked amelioration during pregnancy and aggravation after childbirth strongly suggests a deficiency of the Kidneys and the disharmony of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels; this is confirmed also by the onset of the headaches soon after menarche (which occurred when she was 12½).

We therefore need to confirm the presence of Blood deficiency and Kidney deficiency with further questioning. To confirm or exclude Blood deficiency, we ask about numbness and tingling of the limbs, dizziness, poor memory, insomnia, blurred vision; she did suffer from tingling of her limbs but from none of the other symptoms. However, we can conclude that there is some Blood deficiency from the tingling of her limbs, the dull complexion and the dry hair. As for Kidney deficiency, she had no symptoms of it apart from lower backache and this symptom, together with the onset of the headaches at menarche, the amelioration during pregnancy and the aggravation after childbirth, confirms the presence of a Kidney deficiency and the disharmony of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels.

The pale colour of the tongue and the weakness and emptiness of the pulse confirm Blood deficiency and Kidney deficiency. However, the swelling of the tongue body and the sticky coating point to Phlegm, something that was not apparent from observation nor interrogation; her thin body indicates a tendency to Blood and Yin deficiency, while Phlegm usually manifests with a tendency to being overweight. Furthermore, she had no other symptoms of Phlegm; there was no dizziness, no blurred vision, no feeling of heaviness of the head, no dull headaches, no expectoration of phlegm. However, in these cases, I never discount the tongue signs and I concluded that, although she had no other symptoms of Phlegm, the tongue signs were clear enough to confirm the presence of Phlegm: this is confirmed by the aggravation of the headaches in damp weather. The simultaneous presence of Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm is a very common cause of chronic headaches.

The character of her headaches points very clearly to Liver-Yang rising, which is confirmed by the throbbing nature of the pain, the nausea and vomiting, the sensitivity to light and the location of the headache on the Gall-Bladder channel. We can therefore conclude that the causes of the rising of Liver-Yang are the Blood and the Kidney deficiency: the former constitutes the Manifestation (*Biao*) and the latter the Root (*Ben*). From the point of view of Deficiency and Excess, the former consists of the Blood deficiency, Kidney deficiency and also Spleen-Qi deficiency, while the latter consists of Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm. We can deduce the presence of Spleen-Qi deficiency from the presence of Phlegm and from the Weak pulse.

The pale colour of her tongue body can be attributed to any or all of her deficiency, that is, Blood, Kidney, and Spleen-Qi deficiency. The redness of the sides confirms the rising of Liver-Yang, and the swelling of the tongue body and the sticky coating indicate Phlegm. The last aspect of her tongue to interpret is the peeled patch on the left side in what may, under certain circumstances, be the breast area. There are two ways of interpreting the significance of this peeled patch: it could indicate either the very beginning of Yin deficiency (which may develop from Blood deficiency) or a problem in the left breast. This could be a problem in the left breast (such as mastitis) developed after childbirth; however, the patient said that this was not the case. The other possible explanation is that the peeled patch

may indicate a more serious potential problem in the left breast such as a malignant lump.

In this case we need to treat both the Root and Manifestation simultaneously: the Root by nourishing Blood, tonifying Spleen and Kidneys and strengthening the Penetrating and Directing Vessels, and the Manifestation by subduing Liver-Yang and resolving Phlegm.

Case History

A 50-year-old woman had been suffering from headaches since she was 18 years old. The headaches occurred mostly on the right temple area, were of a throbbing character and were accompanied by blurred vision. The headaches were better during two pregnancies and worse from taking hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

She also suffered from insomnia and constipation, her periods had recently become irregular, and the menstrual blood had dark clots. Her cheeks were red and her eyes lacked sparkle and looked nervous. Her tongue was Red and slightly Purple, redder on the sides and did not have enough coating; her pulse was Fine and slightly Rapid.

Diagnosis

The headaches are clearly due to the rising of Liver-Yang, indicated by their throbbing character, the location on the temple, the blurred vision, the red cheeks and the insomnia. In this case, Liver-Yang rises from a deficiency of Liver-Yin which is manifested by the lack of coating on the tongue, the constipation and the blurred vision. The amelioration during the pregnancies and aggravation from taking HRT in this case indicate a Liver disharmony.

The slightly Purple colour of the tongue indicates a tendency to Blood stasis of which the dark menstrual clots were the only symptom.

Case History

A 36-year-old man complained of migraines since the age of 11. The attacks came every few months affecting either side of the head along the Gall-Bladder channel; the pain was sharp and throbbing and was often accompanied by vomiting and blurred vision. In between the severe attacks, he occasionally suffered from a dull occipital headache. He also suffered from high blood pressure for which he took medication, which, however, did not control it well. He also

complained of a dry mouth, and the interrogation did not reveal any Kidney symptoms.

He was overweight, and his complexion was dull-pale with a greasy skin and several small, pale moles on the face; his eyes were very dull and lacking in lustre. His tongue was dark Red with a redder tip, Swollen and with a rootless white coating that looked like salt. Although he was on beta-blockers, which alter the pulse significantly (making it Deep and Slow), his pulse was very Weak on both Rear positions.

Diagnosis

The headaches are clearly due to Liver-Yang rising, which is evidenced by the severity and throbbing nature of the pain, vomiting and blurred vision. In this case, the origin of Liver-Yang rising is in Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency; this is apparent from the tongue, which shows a severe Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat. It is unusual, but not infrequent, that there are no other symptoms of Kidney deficiency and the dry mouth is the only symptom of Yin deficiency. Exactly the same pathology that is causing the headaches is also at the root of the hypertension.

His complexion and body shape contradict the above patterns because the complexion is dull-pale (while it should be red or floating-red) and the body shape is overweight (while Yin deficiency usually causes a person to be thin). This is due to the presence of Phlegm, of which he has no other symptoms. However, certain signs show the presence of Phlegm; these are the swelling of the tongue, the dull-pale complexion, the greasy skin with small pale moles and the overweight body shape. The lack of *shen* of the eyes indicates severe emotional problems (which he confirmed having) which may also be causing the complexion to be dull and pale, contradicting the tongue.

Case History

A 41-year-old woman had been suffering from headaches for over 20 years, and they had worsened in the past year. The headaches occurred all over the head and were generally dull in character; occasionally they occurred on the left side of her forehead, in which case they were sharp and throbbing in character.

She also suffered from chilblains, cold hands and feet and tiredness and felt cold in general. Occasionally she suffered a visual disturbance consisting in seeing flashing lights. She had had two children, aged 2 and

6, and she had suffered a heavy blood loss after the second childbirth.

Her tongue was slightly Pale on the sides and had a Heart crack. Her pulse was Deep-Weak-Choppy.

Diagnosis

There are symptoms and signs of Liver-Blood deficiency, manifested by the dull headaches, the visual disturbance, the Pale sides of the tongue and the Choppy pulse: this Blood deficiency was obviously aggravated by the haemorrhage after the second childbirth which explains the aggravation of her headaches. Liver-Blood deficiency in this case has given rise to Liver-Yang rising, which is causing the sharp, throbbing headaches on the left side of the forehead. In addition to this, there are also manifestations of Kidney-Yang deficiency (feeling cold, cold hands and feet, tiredness, Deep-Weak pulse).

In this case, attention should be paid to treating both the Root and the Manifestation but with special emphasis on treating the Root, that is, nourishing Liver-Blood and tonifying Kidney-Yang.

Case History

A 13-year-old boy had been suffering from headaches, night-sweating, weakness and tiredness for 3 weeks. These symptoms had an acute onset in springtime, and before that his health and energy were good. On closer questioning, his weakness consisted mostly of a feeling of weary limbs. He also complained of an epigastric discomfort which he found difficult to describe, saying it was like 'a feeling of hunger' and he could not decide whether it was hunger or pain. This was accompanied by a feeling of nausea. In addition, he experienced ache in the joints, especially of the legs, dizziness, restless sleep and irritability.

His tongue was very slightly Red on the sides and had a sticky-white coating. His pulse was Slippery-Wiry-Rapid (92 beats/min).

Diagnosis

The essential feature of this boy's condition is its acute onset. If we analyse his symptoms in isolation, many different patterns would emerge: Damp-Heat in the joints (ache in the joints), Liver-Yang rising (headaches, irritability, dizziness), Yin deficiency (night-sweating, epigastric discomfort with feeling of hunger), Spleen-Qi deficiency (weakness, tiredness, weary limbs) and Stomach-Qi not descending (nausea). However, if we

take the sudden onset into account and consider the symptoms in their totality, it then becomes apparent that this problem is caused by the emergence of Latent Heat in springtime. In this particular case, Latent Heat manifests as Damp-Heat.

Latent Heat occurs when an external pathogenic factor invades the body (in theory in winter, but it can happen in any season) without causing apparent symptoms at the time; the pathogenic factor goes into the Interior, turns into Heat and 'lurks' in the Interior to emerge later with a sudden onset in springtime. When it emerges, Latent Heat manifests with symptoms of Interior Heat but with an acute onset; in this boy's case the symptoms of Heat are insomnia, restless sleep, irritability, night-sweating, feeling of hunger, Red sides of the tongue and Rapid pulse. The symptoms of Damp-Heat are weary limbs, ache in the joints, sticky tongue coating and Slippery pulse.

Although the symptoms appear quite complex, the treatment is relatively simple and should consist in clearing Heat and resolving Damp with a prescription such as Lian Po Yin *Coptis-Magnolia Decoction*.

2. DIZZINESS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 55

Dizziness is a common complaint, especially in the elderly in whom it often is the main presenting problem.

WHY we ask

It is necessary to ask about dizziness, particularly with elderly patients, because dizziness may be a symptom of Liver-Wind and/or Phlegm, both of which are pathogenic factors seen in Wind-stroke, to which elderly people are prone. In women, dizziness is often a key symptom to establish the presence of either Liver-Blood deficiency or a Kidney deficiency.

WHEN we ask

I generally ask about dizziness in the course of the interrogation to confirm or exclude the presence of Liver-Blood deficiency, Kidney deficiency, Liver-Yang rising or Phlegm in young and middle-aged people or of Liver-Wind in the elderly.

HOW we ask

When we ask about dizziness we should make it clear to the patient that even if this symptom is very sporadic,

it still has a clinical significance. Thus, we should ask something like ‘*Do you ever experience any dizziness, even occasionally?*’.

Dizziness can be due to four factors which can be summarized as Wind, Yang, Phlegm and deficiency. In general a sudden onset of dizziness indicates a Full condition, and a gradual onset indicates a Deficiency condition.

The dizziness from Wind is very severe, and the patient feels as if the ground is moving to the point where he or she loses balance. This is Liver-Wind and is usually seen only in the elderly.

The dizziness from Liver-Yang rising also may be severe, but less severe than that from Wind, and is accompanied by headache and blurred vision. This is common in patients of all ages.

The dizziness from Phlegm is less severe than both Liver-Wind and Liver-Yang and is accompanied by a feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head and nausea.

The dizziness from deficiency of Qi and/or Blood is mild. It worsens when the person is tired, and it also may be only postural. Dizziness from a deficiency condition may be due to Blood deficiency (of the Liver and/or Heart) in which case it is accompanied by blurred vision, poor memory and insomnia or to Kidney deficiency, in which case it is accompanied by tinnitus.

Of course, dizziness also may occur as a result of a head trauma.

DIZZINESS

- Internal Wind: severe vertigo
- Liver-Yang rising: dizziness with headaches
- Phlegm: dizziness and muzziness, worse lying down
- Blood deficiency: mild dizziness, better lying down
- Kidney deficiency: chronic mild dizziness
- Head trauma: dizziness after accident

Case History

A 42-year-old woman had been suffering from severe vertigo attacks for 20 years. She suffered severe attacks with vomiting every 6 months, but she also experienced less severe attacks in between. The attacks occurred usually in the morning and were aggravated by lying down and alleviated by sitting up. The attacks became more frequent after the birth of her second child 2½ years previously.

She walked rather slowly, her complexion was dull and sallow, her eyes lacked sparkle and she generally looked very depressed. She had very few other symptoms; she felt cold in general, experienced chilblains in winter, suffered from catarrh and experienced backache.

Her tongue was relatively normal apart from the sides being too Red; her pulse was Weak in general, especially on the left side, and both Kidney positions were very Weak and Deep.

Diagnosis

In this patient, vertigo is caused by a combination of Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm. Apart from the dizziness, Liver-Yang rising is evidenced by the Red sides of the tongue and Phlegm by the catarrh, the vomiting, the aggravation lying down and the amelioration sitting up. Phlegm is causing the more frequent, less severe attacks of dizziness, and Liver-Yang rising is causing the occasional severe attacks.

Apart from these two patterns, there is a Kidney-Yang deficiency and a Spleen-Qi deficiency; the Kidney-Yang deficiency is manifested by the very Weak and Deep pulse on both Rear positions, the aggravation of the dizziness after childbirth, the backache and the cold feeling. The Spleen-Qi deficiency is manifested by the generally Weak pulse and the sallow complexion. Both Spleen-Qi and Kidney-Yang deficiency are obviously the root cause for the formation of Phlegm, and the Kidney deficiency is the cause for Liver-Yang rising. Therefore, Spleen-Qi and Kidney-Yang deficiency are the Root (*Ben*) while Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm are the Manifestation (*Biao*).

3. FEELING OF DISTENSION OF THE HEAD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

A ‘feeling of distension of the head’ is characterized by a bursting sensation as if the head were cracking open. The two main causes of this symptom are Liver-Fire blazing and Dampness obstructing the head.

The feeling of distension of the head caused by Liver-Fire is very intense and is accompanied by a headache of a throbbing nature, a dry mouth, bitter taste, a Red tongue with redder sides and a Wiry pulse.

The feeling of distension of the head caused by Dampness is less severe. Dull but intense, it is accompanied by the sensation that the head is wrapped up. The head feels heavy and the patient has nausea, a sticky tongue coating and a Slippery pulse.

4. FEELING OF HEAVINESS OF THE HEAD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

The symptom of a 'feeling of heaviness of the head' is very common but it is not often reported spontaneously by patients and must be elicited on interrogation. There are five main causes of a feeling of heaviness of the head:

- Wind-Dampness invasion
- Damp-Heat infusing upwards
- Dampness obstructing the Clear Yang orifices
- Phlegm obstructing the head
- Deficiency of Central Qi

The feeling of heaviness of the head deriving from invasion of Wind-Dampness has a sudden onset and is due to external Dampness obstructing the head. It is accompanied by other exterior symptoms such as aversion to cold, fever and a Floating pulse.

The feeling of heaviness of the head due to Damp-Heat infusing upwards is quite severe and is accompanied by a dull headache, a red face, a feeling of heat of the head, a sticky taste, a sticky-yellow tongue coating and a Slippery-Rapid pulse.

The feeling of heaviness of the head caused by Dampness obstructing the Clear Yang orifices is quite severe and is accompanied by blurred vision and a feeling of muzziness of the head, nausea, decreased hearing, a sticky tongue coating and a Slippery pulse.

The feeling of heaviness of the head caused by Phlegm is severe and is accompanied by dizziness, a feeling of muzziness of the head, blurred vision, decreased hearing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, a Swollen tongue with sticky coating and a Slippery pulse.

The feeling of heaviness of the head caused by deficiency of Central Qi (deficiency of Stomach and Spleen) is mild and due not to Dampness or Phlegm weighing the head down as in the previous cases, but to the Stomach and Spleen not nourishing the brain; this being empty, it does not 'sustain' the head, which therefore feels heavy.

FEELING OF HEAVINESS OF THE HEAD

- Invasion of Wind-Dampness: feeling of heaviness of the head with sudden onset
- Damp-Heat: severe feeling of heaviness of the head with headache and thirst
- Dampness: severe feeling of heaviness of the head with sticky taste
- Phlegm: severe feeling of heaviness of the head with dizziness
- Qi deficiency: mild feeling of heaviness of the head

5. FEELING OF MUZZINESS (FUZZINESS) OF THE HEAD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

'Muzziness' (or 'fuzziness' in the United States) of the head indicates a feeling of heaviness and cloudiness of the head accompanied by difficulty in concentration; it is usually worse in the morning. As Phlegm in the head obstructs the orifices, a feeling of muzziness is often accompanied also by a stuffed nose, blurred vision or a sticky taste.

A feeling of muzziness of the head is due either to Dampness (with or without Heat) infusing upwards towards the head or to Phlegm in the head. If it is caused by Phlegm, there also will be dizziness.



Dampness and Phlegm in the head both cause a feeling of heaviness and muzziness but only Phlegm causes also dizziness.

FEELING OF MUZZINESS (FUZZINESS) OF THE HEAD

- Damp-Heat: feeling of muzziness of the head with headache and thirst
- Dampness: feeling of muzziness of the head with sticky taste
- Phlegm: severe feeling of muzziness of the head with dizziness

6. BRAIN NOISE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

'Brain noise' should be distinguished from tinnitus: the former is experienced inside the head, whilst the latter consists of a ringing in the ears. The four main causes of brain noise are:

- deficiency of the Sea of Marrow
- deficiency of Blood of the Heart and Spleen
- Damp-Heat infusing upwards
- Liver-Fire

The brain noise caused by deficiency of the Sea of Marrow is accompanied by dizziness, poor memory and weak back and legs; it is due to the deficient Marrow failing to 'fill' the brain.

The brain noise caused by deficiency of Blood of the Heart and Spleen is accompanied by dizziness, palpitations, insomnia, poor memory, Pale tongue and Choppy pulse; it is due to Qi and Blood failing to rise to the head to brighten its orifices.

The brain noise due to Damp-Heat infusing upwards is accompanied by a feeling of heaviness of the head, a dull headache, nausea, a sticky yellow tongue coating and a Slippery-Rapid pulse; it is due to Dampness obstructing the head's orifices.

The brain noise due to Liver-Fire is accompanied by irritability, hypochondrial distension, sighing and a Wiry pulse; it is due to Liver-Fire rising to the brain.

BRAIN NOISE

- Deficiency of the Sea of Marrow: dizziness, poor memory, weak back and legs
- Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency: dizziness, palpitations, insomnia, poor memory, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse
- Damp-Heat: feeling of heaviness of the head, dull headache, nausea, Slippery-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse
- Liver-Fire: irritability, hypochondrial distension, sighing, Wiry pulse

7. NUMBNESS/TINGLING OF THE SKIN OF THE HEAD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

Numbness and/or tingling are called *Ma Mu*: *Ma* means 'tingling', while *Mu* means 'numbness'. Tingling is more often due to Blood deficiency, while numbness is more often due to Qi deficiency with Phlegm.

The two main causes of numbness of the skin of the head are Blood deficiency and Phlegm.

Numbness of the skin of the head due to Blood deficiency is accompanied by dizziness, poor memory, blurred vision, palpitations, insomnia, Pale tongue and Choppy pulse; it is due to Liver and Heart-Blood failing to nourish the skin of the head.

Numbness of the skin of the head due to Phlegm is accompanied by dizziness, blurred vision, nausea, feeling of oppression of the chest, a Swollen tongue with sticky coating and a Slippery pulse; it is due to Phlegm stagnating in the space between the skin and muscles.

NUMBNESS/TINGLING OF THE SKIN OF THE HEAD

- Blood deficiency: dizziness, blurred vision, poor memory, palpitations, insomnia, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse
- Phlegm: dizziness, blurred vision, nausea, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse

8. ITCHY SCALP

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

The most common cause of an itchy scalp is Liver-Blood deficiency, and this is especially common in women. An alternative cause is Liver- and/or Kidney-Yin deficiency. It should not be forgotten that Wind has a drying action on the skin and may also cause the scalp to be dry and itchy; this is more common in the elderly. Other possible causes of an itchy scalp are Liver-Fire and Damp-Heat in the Liver channel.

9. FEELING OF COLD OF THE HEAD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

A feeling of cold of the head is usually experienced on the occiput and, besides an actual feeling of cold, it is characterized by a desire to wear a scarf around the neck and an aversion to being exposed to wind. The two main causes of a feeling of cold of the occiput are stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel and Emptiness and Cold of the Governing Vessel.

The feeling of cold from stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel is characterized by a cold feeling of the occiput, vertical headache, a desire to cover one's head with a scarf, cold hands and feet, a greenish complexion and vomiting.

The feeling of cold of the head from deficiency and Cold of the Governing Vessel is characterized by a cold feeling of the vertex, occiput and upper back, cold limbs, feeling cold in general, sore and weak back and dull pale complexion.

10. FEELING OF HEAT OF THE HEAD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

A 'feeling of heat of the head' includes a subjective feeling of heat and an objective hot feeling of the head to touch. The three main causes of hot feeling of the head are Liver-Fire blazing, Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat and True Cold False Yang.

Liver-Fire may cause a feeling of heat of the head and face which is accompanied by irritability, a bitter taste, thirst and a Red tongue with redder sides and a Wiry pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat may cause a feeling of heat of the head accompanied by dizziness, tinnitus, five-palm heat and a Red tongue with redder tip and without coating.

If there is a feeling of heat in the head with malar flush, sore throat, loose stools, cold limbs and Minute pulse, it may indicate True Cold and False Heat: this condition is quite rare.

11. FAINTING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

'Fainting' may range from sudden collapse with total loss of consciousness to mild, transient episodes of 'passing out' but without total loss of consciousness. For example, there are patients who periodically 'pass out' but can still hear people around them.

The most important task is to differentiate Full from Empty causes of fainting. In other words, fainting may occur either because a pathogenic factor obstructs the Mind's orifices or because deficient Qi, Blood or Yin fail to anchor the Mind and/or Ethereal Soul.

The most common pathogenic factor to cloud the Mind's orifices is Phlegm, which will be manifested by a Swollen tongue with sticky coating and Slippery pulse. Retention of food may also cloud the Mind's orifices, but this is rather more rare and it occurs more in children or in the elderly.

Among the Empty causes of fainting, are a deficiency of Blood or Yin of the Heart and/or Liver, and a deficiency of Kidney-Yang.

Fainting from a Full cause manifests with loss of consciousness, while fainting from an Empty cause may manifest with transient episodes of 'passing out', without total loss of consciousness.

Of course, in many cases, there may be a combination of Full and Empty patterns, for example, Phlegm with Liver-Blood deficiency.

Case History

A 45-year-old woman had been suffering from what she described as "turns", that is, she had recurrent episodes of fainting but without total loss of consciousness as, during these episodes, she could hear people around her. These episodes were more frequent during or after her periods.

She felt very tired in general and had very little vitality and energy. Her complexion was dull-pale, her tongue was Pale, Swollen and partially peeled with a patchy, sticky coating and her pulse was Weak but slightly Slippery.

Diagnosis

The swelling of the tongue with a sticky coating and the Slippery pulse clearly indicate Phlegm clouding the Mind's orifices and causing fainting. The Pale tongue, Weak pulse, dull-pale complexion and aggravation of the fainting episodes during or after the period indicate a Liver-Blood deficiency. However, even in the absence of other symptoms, the partial peeling of the tongue clearly indicates a condition of Yin deficiency, in this case probably of the Stomach and Liver.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how to ask about the head.
- The systematic approach to questioning: onset, time, location, nature of pain, ameliorating or aggravating factors, differentiation of external from internal origin.
- Why, when and how to ask about dizziness.
- The overview of fainting, a feeling of distension, heaviness, muzziness, brain noise, feeling of cold or heat of the head, numbness/tingling of the skin of head or an itchy scalp.

35

Face

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WHY we ask

Energetically, the face is an area of concentration of Yang channels. Pure Yang needs to rise to the face to brighten the orifices so as to promote clear vision, smell, hearing and taste. When clear Yang-Qi fails to ascend to the face, Dampness or Phlegm often accumulate in this area, obstructing the sense orifices and the sinuses. Dampness and Phlegm are extremely common pathogenic factors, and, not infrequently, facial symptoms are their only manifestation (e.g. sinus problems). For

this reason, I nearly always ask about facial symptoms to confirm or exclude the diagnosis of Dampness or Phlegm.

Another reason for asking about facial symptoms is to confirm or exclude a diagnosis of Heat or Empty Heat by asking if the patient has experienced a feeling of heat in the face, which is the main area where Heat or Empty Heat manifests.

WHEN we ask

I generally always ask about any feeling of heat in the face whenever a pattern of Heat or Empty Heat emerges from the interrogation. It is important to remember that we should ask about feelings of heat in the face even when the patient presents with all the symptoms of Yang deficiency because there are many situations in which contradictory Hot and Cold symptoms appear. A common example of this situation is in menopausal women who suffer from hot flushes of the face occurring against a background of a simultaneous Kidney-Yang and Kidney-Yin deficiency, with a predominance of the former. For other causes of simultaneous hot and cold feeling, please see [Chapter 43](#).

I also ask about facial symptoms if I suspect a pattern of Dampness or Phlegm. In such a case I always question the patient about nasal symptoms, such as runny or blocked nose, and about facial ache.

HOW we ask

When we ask about feelings of heat in the face, we should make it clear to the patient that even if this symptom is experienced only occasionally, it has a diagnostic significance. We might therefore ask, '*Do you occasionally feel hot in the face?*'

The interrogation regarding face symptoms will be articulated as follows:

1. Face
2. Nose
3. Teeth and gums

4. Mouth and lips
5. Tongue

1. FACE

The following face symptoms will be discussed:

- a) Feeling of heat of the face
- b) Facial pain
- c) Feeling of numbness/tingling of the face

a) Feeling of heat of the face

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

It is important to ask if a patient suffers from a feeling of heat in the face, even if he or she feels cold in general. Especially in women, the two symptoms often coexist.

A feeling of heat in the face may be due to either Full or Empty Heat of any organ. Full Heat will manifest with a feeling of heat in the face occurring either mostly in daytime or throughout the day, while Empty Heat manifests with a feeling of heat in the face occurring mostly in the afternoon and evening (see [Chapter 55](#)).

i) Feeling of heat in the face in women

In women, more than men, a feeling of heat in the face is often associated with contradictory Cold symptoms or signs in other parts of the body; for example, women frequently experience a feeling of heat in the face when their feet feel cold or they need to urinate frequently. Women's pathology differs from that of men, and a feeling of heat in the face with contradictory cold symptoms may be due to four main causes.

First of all, it may be due to a simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yang and Kidney-Yin with some Empty Heat, a situation that is very common in menopausal women. In this case, the woman will experience hot flushes and a feeling of heat of the face and other Empty Heat signs, such as night-sweating and 5-palm heat, but also Cold symptoms such as cold feet and frequent urination which derive from Kidney-Yang deficiency. Of course, a simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang may occur in men too, but it is far more frequent in women: indeed, in my experience, especially in women over 40, this situation is the norm rather than the exception.

The second cause of a feeling of heat in the face with contradictory Cold symptoms in women is a deficiency of Blood giving rise to some Empty Heat; the Blood deficiency may cause some Cold symptoms, especially cold hands, and the Empty Heat deriving from it may

cause a feeling of heat in the face. This pattern – that is, Empty Heat from Blood deficiency – occurs only in women.

The third cause of a feeling of heat in the face with contradictory Cold symptoms in women is a disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel. When the Qi of the Penetrating Vessel rebels upwards, it rushes to the face causing a feeling of facial heat and, since it fails to descend to the legs through the descendant branch, it causes cold feet. Again, such pathology of the Penetrating Vessel may occur in men too, but it is far more common in women.

The fourth cause of a feeling of heat in the face with contradictory Cold symptoms is Yin-Fire. Of course, Yin-Fire may occur in men as well as women.



A feeling of heat in the face with contradictory Cold symptoms in women may be caused by:

- Simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang
- Blood deficiency with Empty Heat
- Disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel
- Yin-Fire

ii) Feeling of heat in the face in men

In men, a feeling of Heat with contradictory Cold symptoms may be due to three of the above-mentioned causes in women, that is, simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang, rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel, and Yin-Fire; the first two are far less common in men than in women.

In men, a feeling of heat in the face with contradictory Cold symptoms in other parts of the body is usually due to coexisting patterns, such as Liver-Fire and Kidney-Yang deficiency.

b) Facial pain

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#)

The five main causes of facial pain are invasion of Wind-Heat, invasion of Wind-Cold, Damp-Heat, Liver-Fire and Qi deficiency with Blood stasis.

The facial pain due to invasion of Wind-Heat is characterized by an acute onset, a severe pain on the cheeks or jaws, a feeling of heat of the face, face feeling hot on palpation, headache, sore throat, aversion to cold and fever.

The facial pain due to invasion of Wind-Cold is characterized by a spastic pain of the cheeks and jaws with sudden onset, sneezing, runny nose, aversion to cold, fever and a Floating-Tight pulse.

The facial pain due to Damp-Heat is characterized by a severe pain in the cheeks and forehead accompanied by red cheeks, greasy skin, a sticky-yellow or greenish nasal discharge and a sticky-yellow tongue coating.

The facial pain due to Liver-Fire is characterized by pain in the cheeks and forehead, redness of the cheeks, thirst, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder sides and Wiry-Rapid pulse.

The facial pain due to Qi deficiency and Blood stasis is characterized by an intense, often unilateral pain of the cheeks, boring in nature and long in duration and accompanied by a dark complexion and a Purple tongue.

Trigeminal neuralgia is, of course, a type of facial pain that is usually due to Liver-Fire combined with Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency.

FACIAL PAIN

- Invasion of Wind-Heat: acute onset, severe pain of the cheeks or jaws, feeling of heat of the face, face feels hot on palpation, headache, sore throat, aversion to cold, fever
- Invasion of Wind-Cold: acute onset, spastic pain of cheeks and jaws, sneezing, aversion to cold, dorsum of hands hot, runny nose
- Damp-Heat: severe pain in the cheeks and forehead, red cheeks, greasy skin, sticky-yellow or sticky-greenish nasal discharge, sticky-yellow tongue coating
- Liver-Fire: pain in the cheeks and forehead, red cheeks, thirst, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder sides, Wiry-Rapid pulse
- Qi deficiency and Blood stasis: intense, often unilateral pain of the cheeks, boring in nature and long in duration, dark complexion, Purple tongue.

c) Feeling of numbness/tingling of the face

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 55

The five main causes of numbness or tingling in the face are invasion of external Wind, internal Liver-Wind, Stomach-Fire, internal Wind with Phlegm and Blood deficiency.

Numbness or tingling in the face caused by invasion of external Wind is characterized by a sudden onset and short duration and is accompanied by deviation of eye and mouth.

Numbness or tingling in the face caused by internal Liver-Wind is accompanied by headache, giddiness, tremors and a Wiry pulse.

Numbness or tingling in the face caused by Stomach-Fire is accompanied by intense thirst, epigastric pain and a Yellow tongue coating.

Numbness or tingling in the face caused by internal Wind and Phlegm is accompanied by deviation of the mouth, slurred speech and hemiplegia.

Numbness or tingling in the face caused by Blood deficiency is accompanied by a dull-pale complexion, blurred vision, dizziness, Pale tongue and a Choppy pulse.

FEELING OF NUMBNESS AND TINGLING IN THE FACE

- External Wind: sudden onset, short duration, deviation of eye and mouth
- Liver-Wind: headache, giddiness, tremors, Wiry pulse
- Stomach-Fire: intense thirst, epigastric pain, Yellow tongue coating
- Internal Wind with Phlegm: deviation of the mouth, slurred speech, hemiplegia
- Blood deficiency: dull-pale complexion, blurred vision, dizziness, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse

2. NOSE

In Chinese medicine the nose was called *Ming Tang*, which means 'Bright Hall', signifying that it is an area of concentration of Yang-Qi and a place through which the Clear Yang ascends to the head. The Song dynasty's doctor Chen Wu Ze says: *'The nose is the opening of the Lungs through which the five odours are detected; it is the place where the Yin and Yang descend and ascend and through which the Clear Qi flows.'*¹

The nose is the external orifice of the Lungs, and it is therefore closely related to breathing, smell and sound (of the voice). The organs influencing the nose are the Lungs, Kidneys, Spleen, Stomach, Gall-Bladder and Governing Vessel. External Wind-Heat invades the body via the nose and mouth. The nose can reflect pathological changes of many different organs, the balance of Yin and Yang, Heat and Cold, deficiency and excess and stasis of Blood.

The following nose symptoms will be discussed:

- Blocked nose
- Itchy nose
- Sneezing
- Nose ache
- Nose pain
- Dry nostrils
- Loss of sense of smell
- Runny nose

a) Blocked nose

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 58

Excluding acute invasions of Wind, a blocked nose is usually caused by Dampness stagnating in the nose occurring against a background of Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency. In this case, the nose is often also swollen and pale and the problem is intermittent. This is a very common symptom in Western patients and often leads to chronic sinusitis.

A blocked nose also may be caused by Qi and Blood stagnation, in which case the nose would be swollen, purple and with an uneven surface.

Gall-Bladder Heat also may cause a blocked nose, in which case the nose membranes are red and swollen and there is a sticky-yellow nasal discharge.

In a newborn baby, a blocked nose (which may affect its ability to breast-feed) is usually due to invasion of Wind-Cold.



TREATMENT

The best local point for nose problems in my experience is the extra point Bitong. I prefer it to L.I.-20 Yingxiang. The distal points are L.I.-4 Hegu and LU-7 Lieque.

BLOCKED NOSE

- Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency: swollen and pale nose, problem comes and goes
- Qi and Blood stagnation: swollen and purple nose
- Gall-Bladder Heat: nose membranes red and swollen, sticky-yellow nasal discharge
- Invasion of Wind: sudden onset, accompanied by symptoms of Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat

b) Itchy nose

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 58

Excluding acute invasions of Wind-Heat, itchiness of the nose may be due to Lung-Heat, deficiency of the Defensive Qi and, in children, Nose Childhood Nutritional Impairment.

When the cause is Lung-Heat, the nose is itchy, dry and red. The most common cause of an itchy nose, however, is a deficiency of the Lungs' Defensive Qi causing itchiness of the nose, sneezing and a profuse, watery nasal discharge coming in bouts. In Chinese medicine this was called *Bi Jiu*, and it corresponds closely

to allergic rhinitis in Western medicine. In my experience, however, the symptoms of allergic rhinitis with itchy nose, sneezing and profuse watery discharge are due also to a deficiency of Kidney-Yang and the Governing Vessel.

In small children, an itchy nose may be a symptom of Nose Childhood Nutritional Impairment. In such cases the itchiness is accompanied by scabs or ulcers on the nose, a watery-yellow nasal discharge, dry skin and hot hands and feet, and the child has a tendency to pick his or her nose. This condition is usually caused by irregular feeding and poor-quality breast milk which leads to Damp-Heat in the nose.

ITCHY NOSE

- Invasion of Wind-Heat: sudden onset, accompanied by symptoms of an external invasion
- Lung-Heat: itchy, dry and red nose
- Deficiency of Lung and Kidney Defensive-Qi system and of the Governing Vessel: sneezing, profuse, watery nasal discharge coming in bouts
- Nose Childhood Nutritional Impairment: scabs, ulcers, watery-yellow nasal discharge, dry skin, hot hands and feet

c) Sneezing

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 58

In acute cases, sneezing is always due to invasion of Wind, which may be either Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat, although the former is more common. The sneezing is accompanied by aversion to cold, shivers, fever, body aches and a Floating pulse. Other manifestations depend on whether the cause is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

Chronic sneezing is always a sign of allergic rhinitis which, in my experience, usually occurs against a background of Lung-Qi deficiency and Kidney-Yang deficiency. In my opinion, there also will be a deficiency of the Kidney Defensive-Qi system, as well as of the Governing Vessel. In such cases, sneezing is accompanied by allergy to house-dust mites or pollen, itchy nose, tiredness, sweating, slight shortness of breath, Pale tongue and a Weak pulse.

SNEEZING

- Invasion of Wind: sudden onset, aversion to cold, shivers, fever, Floating pulse
- Deficiency of Lung and Kidney Defensive-Qi systems: allergies, itchy nose, tiredness, sweating, slight shortness of breath, Pale tongue, Weak pulse

d) Nose ache

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

Excluding acute invasions of Wind-Heat, nose ache may be due to Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs, Lung-Qi deficiency or Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency.

Nose ache due to Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs is accompanied by a sticky-yellow nasal discharge, a redness of the nose and a cough with expectoration of sticky-yellow phlegm.

When due to Lung-Qi deficiency, nose ache is accompanied by a watery nasal discharge and spontaneous sweating, weak voice and an Empty pulse.

Chronic Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency with retention of Dampness in the nose also may cause nose ache in which case there is a sticky-white nasal discharge and often loss of the sense of smell.

NOSE ACHE

- Acute invasion of Wind-Heat: nose ache with aversion to cold, fever, body aches, Floating pulse
- Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs: nose ache with sticky-yellow nasal discharge, red nose, cough with expectoration of sticky-yellow phlegm
- Lung-Qi deficiency: dull nose ache, watery nasal discharge, spontaneous sweating, weak voice, Empty pulse
- Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness: nose ache with sticky nasal discharge, loss of sense of smell

e) Nose pain

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

Excluding acute invasions of Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat, nose pain may be due to Lung-Heat, Damp-Heat, Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat or cancer.

Lung-Heat may cause nose pain in acute conditions when the pathogenic factor enters the Qi level. When nose pain is caused by Damp-Heat, it is accompanied by a sticky-yellow discharge and a feeling of heaviness and heat in the face. When caused by Empty Heat of the Lungs, nose pain is accompanied by a dryness and feeling of heat in the nose, with nasal scabs and redness. It should be borne in mind that nose pain also may be caused by carcinoma of the nose, in which case the nose pain extends to the head and there is nosebleed with a swelling of the nasal mucosa.

NOSE PAIN

- Acute invasion of Wind-Cold: acute nose pain, aversion to cold, fever, sneezing, runny nose with white discharge, Floating-Tight pulse
- Acute invasion of Wind-Heat: acute nose pain, aversion to cold, fever, sticky-yellow nasal discharge, sore throat, body aches, Floating-Rapid pulse
- Lung-Heat: acute nose pain after an invasion of external Wind, fever, red face and nose, cough with expectoration of yellow phlegm, thirst, Rapid-Overflowing pulse
- Damp-Heat: nose pain, red cheeks, sticky-yellow nasal discharge, cheek pain, feeling of heat in the face and of heaviness of the head, sticky-yellow nasal discharge
- Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: dull nose pain, scabs on the nose, dry nose, malar flush, dry cough, night sweating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse
- Cancer of the nose: nose pain extending to the head, nosebleed, swelling of nasal mucosa.

f) Dry nostrils

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

'Dry nostrils' refers to dryness of the nasal mucosa.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat can cause dryness of the nostrils spreading to the throat.

Dryness of the nostrils also appears in the Stomach-Heat pattern at the Qi level within the Four Level Identification of Patterns.

Dryness of the nostrils also may be caused by Blood stasis, in which case the nose bridge is dry, there is thirst without desire to swallow and dark rings are present under the eyes.

Chronic Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency may cause dryness of the internal mucosa of the nose, a loss of the sense of smell and often a turbid discharge from the eyes.

DRY NOSTRILS

- Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: dry nostrils, dry throat, dry cough, night sweating, 5-palm heat
- Stomach Heat at the Qi Level: dry nostrils, fever, thirst, sweating
- Blood stasis: dry nostrils and nose bridge, purple nose bridge, dark rings under the eyes, dark complexion
- Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency: dry nostrils, loss of sense of smell, turbid discharge from the eyes

g) Loss of sense of smell

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#)

The most common cause of loss of sense of smell is due to a deficiency of Lung- and Spleen-Qi with an inability

of the Clear Qi to rise to the nose. Cases of acute and temporary loss of smell are due to invasion of Wind.

Inability to smell fragrant smells when the nasal mucosa are swollen and dark red is due to Damp-Heat in the Girdle Vessel.

Loss of the sense of smell in the course of a serious illness always indicates a poor prognosis.



TREATMENT

Loss of sense of smell: LU-7 Lieque, LI-4 Hegu, Bitong.

h) Runny nose

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 58; Part 1 Observation, Chapter 20

A runny nose with an acute onset is due to an invasion of Wind, which may be Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat, but it is especially likely to occur with Wind-Cold. The severity of this symptom reflects directly the severity of the Cold (as opposed to Wind).

A chronic, runny nose with a thick-sticky discharge, which is usually yellow, is generally due to Damp-Heat in the Stomach channel (often corresponding to sinusitis in Western medicine).

A chronic, profusely runny nose with a clear, watery discharge indicates a deficiency of Lung-Qi with Empty Cold (often corresponding to allergic rhinitis in Western medicine). Such a profuse, watery discharge also may be due to a deficiency of Yang of both the Lungs and Kidneys and of the Governing Vessel.

3. TEETH AND GUMS

The following teeth and gum symptoms will be discussed:

- a) Toothache
- b) Inflamed gums
- c) Bleeding gums
- d) Receding gums

The teeth are an extension of the bones and as such are governed by the Kidneys while the gums are under the influence of the Stomach. More specifically, the gums of the upper jaw are under the influence of the Large Intestine, and those of the lower jaw are under the influence of the Stomach. The state of the teeth and gums therefore reflects the state of the Kidneys, Stomach and Large Intestine. For example, tooth cavities and loss of teeth may reflect a Kidney deficiency, and receding gums may reflect a Stomach deficiency.

a) Toothache

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 60

As a general rule, a Full condition causes a toothache that is constant and intense, while an Empty condition causes a toothache that comes and goes and is mild. Toothache that is worse in the evening and better in the morning points to Yin deficiency, while one that is better in the evening and worse in the morning indicates Yang deficiency. As far as channels are concerned, the upper teeth are influenced by the Large Intestine channel and the lower ones by the Stomach channel.

Excluding external invasions of Wind, which cause an acute and temporary toothache, toothache may be caused by Stomach-Fire, Heat in the Spleen and Heart, Damp-Heat, 'Wind-Cold in the Brain' and Stomach and Spleen deficiency.

Stomach-Fire is a common cause of toothache, in which case toothache is accompanied by thirst, swollen cheeks, dry stools, mental restlessness, Red tongue with a dry-yellow coating in the centre and a Rapid-Overflowing pulse. When Stomach-Fire combines with Toxic Heat, the toothache is very intense, there may be a fever and the tongue would have a thick-dry-yellow coating and red points; this may correspond to a tooth abscess in Western medicine. Toothache also may be caused by Heat in the Spleen and Heart, in which case there may be bleeding gums, insomnia and mental restlessness.



CLINICAL NOTE

In Chinese medicine the teeth are related to the Kidneys and the gums to the Stomach. However, there are teeth problems that are related to the condition of the gums (and therefore Stomach). It would therefore be wrong to attribute these problems to the Kidneys. Examples of teeth problems due to the condition of the gums are toothache, sensitivity to cold or heat, and loose teeth.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach is also a frequent cause of toothache which is usually accompanied by swelling of the gums. The relative importance of the toothache and the gum swelling gives an indication of the prevalence of Heat or Dampness: if the gum swelling predominates over the toothache, Dampness is predominant; if the toothache predominates over the gum swelling, Heat is predominant.

A severe toothache that extends to the head is due to 'Wind-Cold in the Brain' and Blood stasis. Stomach- and

Spleen-Qi deficiency may cause a chronic, intermittent dull toothache and receding gums; this may be due to excessive consumption of sour foods.

Other teeth symptoms include loose teeth and grinding teeth; and other gum symptoms include inflamed gums, bleeding gums and receding gums. For the diagnostic significance of these symptoms please see Part 5, [Chapter 60](#).

TOOTHACHE

- Invasion of external Wind: acute toothache with headache and aversion to cold
- Stomach-Fire: intense toothache, thirst, swollen cheeks, Red tongue
- Toxic Heat: very intense toothache, very swollen cheeks, fever, Red tongue with red points
- Spleen- and Heart-Heat: toothache, bleeding gums, insomnia
- Damp-Heat in the Stomach: toothache with swelling of the gums and sticky taste
- 'Wind-Cold in the Brain' with Blood stasis: severe toothache extending to the head
- Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency: chronic, dull toothache with receding gums

b) Inflamed gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Stomach Heat is a common cause of inflamed gums: this may be both Full Heat and Empty Heat from Stomach-Yin deficiency. Other causes include invasion of external Wind-Heat in acute cases and two conditions that affect children and are characterized by swollen and inflamed gums.

c) Bleeding gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

The gums may bleed either from deficient Spleen-Qi not holding Blood or from Heat. This may be Stomach Full or Empty Heat or Empty Heat from Kidney-Yin deficiency.

BLEEDING GUMS

- Deficient Spleen-Qi not holding Blood: bleeding gums, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools
- Stomach Heat: inflamed, bleeding gums, feeling of heat, thirst
- Stomach Empty Heat: bleeding gums, dry mouth, desire to drink in small sips
- Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: bleeding gums, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, malar flush

d) Receding gums

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Receding gums may be due to a general deficiency of Qi and Blood, Stomach Heat or Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. It should be noted that 'loose teeth' is a prominent symptom of Kidney-Deficiency patterns: however, teeth become loose generally because of gum disease. It can therefore be assumed that the Kidneys influence also the gums.

RECEDING GUMS

- Qi and Blood deficiency: tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, pale complexion
- Stomach Heat: receding and inflamed gums, thirst, red face, feeling of heat
- Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: receding gums, dizziness, tinnitus, malar flush, night-sweating

4. MOUTH AND LIPS

The mouth and lips are related to the Spleen. [Chapter 37](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'The mouth and lips are the orifice of the Spleen.'*¹² [Chapter 17](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'The Spleen opens into the mouth. When the Spleen is harmonized the mouth can distinguish the five flavours.'*¹³

The mouth and lips are primarily influenced by the Stomach and Large Intestine channels; the Liver channel wraps around the lips and so do the Penetrating and Directing Vessels. Internally, other channels flow to the inside of the mouth and the tongue and, in particular, the Heart Connecting channel, the Kidney Main and Divergent channel and the Spleen main channel.

The saliva is mostly under the control of the Stomach, Spleen and Kidneys, and a normal moisture of the mouth indicates a normal state of the Body Fluids.

The following mouth and lip signs will be discussed:

- a) Mouth ulcers
- b) Cold sores

a) Mouth ulcers

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Recurrent mouth ulcers are a relatively common symptom, and the most important differentiation is that between ulcers deriving from a Full condition and those



Figure 35.1. Mouth ulcers from Damp-Heat in the stomach.

deriving from an Empty condition. As a general rule, mouth ulcers that recur very frequently or are even almost permanent indicate a Full condition, whereas ulcers that come and go usually indicate an Empty condition.

The most common cause of ulcers is Heat. Full Heat should be differentiated from Empty Heat; in general, mouth ulcers from Full Heat are very painful and have a red rim around them, while those from Empty Heat are less painful with a pale rim around them.

Mouth ulcers should be further differentiated according to their location: ulcers on the gums are due to Heat or Empty Heat of the Stomach or Large Intestine (Stomach on the lower gum and Large Intestine on the upper gum); ulcers on the tongue are usually related to the Heart channel, especially if they occur on the tip. Ulcers on the inside of the cheeks are usually related to the Stomach channel. In women, and especially in pregnancy or after childbirth, a disharmony of the Directing Vessel may cause mouth ulcers; typically these occur on the floor of the mouth under the tongue.

The most common cause of mouth ulcers is Damp-Heat in the Stomach, in which case the ulcers have a red rim around them, are inside the cheeks or on the lower gums and are associated with thirst, epigastric

pain and a yellow tongue coating in the centre (Fig. 35.1).

Another common type of mouth ulcer is that from Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat, in which case the ulcers have a pale rim around them and are aggravated by overwork and lack of sleep. Other symptoms and signs would include a dry throat at night, night-sweating and a Red tongue without coating (Fig. 35.2).

Mouth ulcers also may arise from a severe Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency and a deficiency of the Original Qi; the depletion of the Original Qi (after a chronic illness or from overwork) creates the conditions for the pathological arousal of the Minister Fire, which flows upwards to the mouth causing mouth ulcers. This is called Yin Fire (Fig. 35.3). These ulcers are intermittent, have pale rims, are aggravated by overwork and are associated with other manifestations of Qi deficiency.

Another type of mouth ulcer is that due to Heat at the Blood Level; this is a Heat that is deeper and more intense than the Stomach-Heat (or Damp-Heat) mentioned above (Fig. 35.4). It is associated with a deep-red tongue without coating. These ulcers are dark-red, deep and very painful.

For the diagnostic significance of other types of mouth ulcers see Part 5, Chapter 60.



Figure 35.2. Mouth ulcer from Empty Heat.



Figure 35.3. Mouth ulcer from Yin Fire.

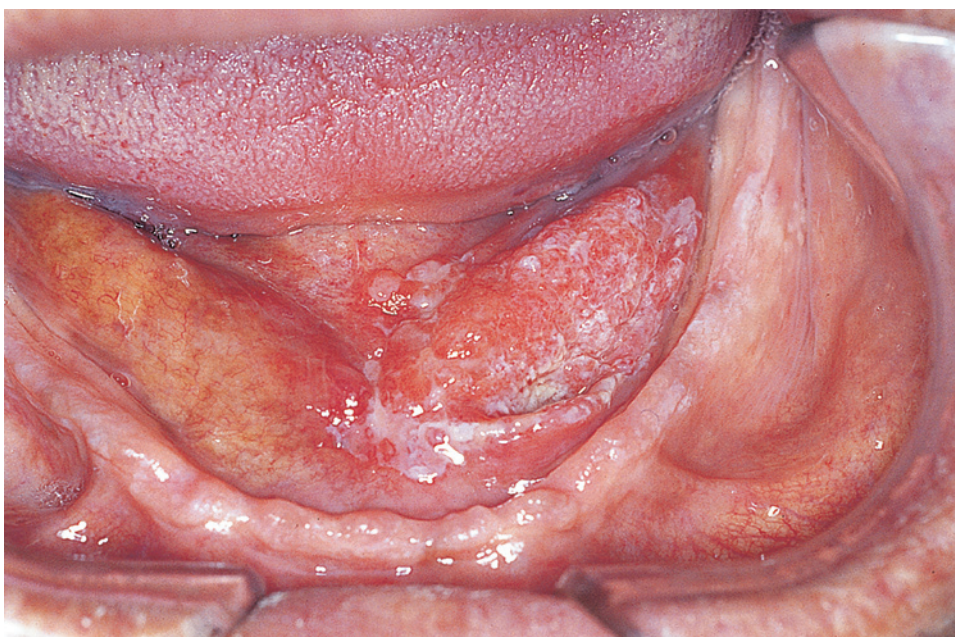


Figure 35.4. Mouth ulcer from Heat at the Blood Level.

MOUTH ULCERS

- Stomach-Heat or Damp-Heat: very painful, red-rimmed ulcers on the gums
- Stomach Empty Heat: pale-rimmed ulcers on the gums
- Heart-Fire or Heart Empty Heat: ulcers on the tip of the tongue
- Stomach-Heat: ulcers on the inside of the cheeks
- Disharmony of Directing Vessel: ulcers in pregnancy
- Kidney-Yin deficiency or Original-Qi deficiency: pale-rimmed ulcers aggravated by overwork
- Heat at the Blood Level: deep, dark-red ulcers, very painful.

b) Cold sores

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Cold sores are generally related to the Stomach channel and reflect Full Heat, Empty Heat or Qi deficiency. When due to Stomach Heat, the cold sores appear suddenly and cause a burning pain; when due to Stomach Empty Heat they come in bouts, recurring over many years; when due to Qi deficiency, they occur in bouts over a long period of time, are usually pale in colour and are aggravated by overwork.

For other signs related to the lips, see Part 5, [Chapter 60](#).

5. TONGUE

The following tongue signs will be discussed:

- a) Itchy tongue
- b) Numbness of the tongue
- c) Tongue pain

a) Itchy tongue

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Itchy tongue is generally due to Heat, and this can either be external Heat in the form of Wind-Heat or Heart-Heat which may be Full or Empty.

b) Numbness of the tongue

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Numbness of the tongue may be due to Heart-Blood deficiency or to Spleen-Qi deficiency. In Full conditions, numbness of the tongue may be due to Phlegm obstructing the orifices, Liver-Wind or chronic Blood stasis.

c) Tongue pain

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 60](#)

Pain of the tongue is always due to Heat, and the most common cause is Heart-Fire or Heart Empty Heat.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how to ask about the face.
- That the face is a concentrated area of Yang channels where Dampness, Phlegm, Heat and Empty Heat often manifest.
- The clinical significance of a feeling of heat in the face for women and men, facial pain and a feeling of numbness/tingling of the face.
- The clinical significance of a blocked nose, itchy nose, sneezing, runny nose, nose ache, nose pain, dry nostrils or loss of sense of smell.
- That the state of the teeth and gums reflects that of the Kidneys, Stomach and Large Intestine.
- The clinical significance of toothache, inflamed gums, bleeding gums and receding gums.
- That the mouth and lips are related to the Spleen, influenced by the Stomach and Large Intestine channels and encircled by the Liver channel and Penetrating and Directing Vessels.
- The clinical significance of mouth ulcers, cold sores, tongue itchiness, numbness or pain.

Liver-Fire or Phlegm-Fire in the Heart may also cause tongue pain.

END NOTES

1. Cited in Ma Zhong Xue 1989 Great Treatise of Chinese Diagnostic Methods (*Zhong Guo Yi Xue Zhen Fa Da Quan* 中国医学诊法大全) Shandong Science Publishing House, Jinan p. 56.
2. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published c.100 BC, p. 78.
3. Ibid, p. 50.

Throat and Neck

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Sore throat

Dry throat

Itchy throat

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The throat and the front of the neck form an area in which practically all channels converge. With the single exception of the Bladder channel, 11 of the 12 channels course through either the front or the side of the throat. Of the eight Extraordinary vessels, six go through the centre or the side of the throat; the exceptions are the Governing Vessel and the Girdle Vessel. Thus, being influenced by so many channels and therefore internal organs, the throat reflects clearly conditions of Yin-Yang, Heat-Cold and Deficiency-Excess and is an important diagnostic area. The throat is influenced particularly by the Lungs, Stomach, Large Intestine, Liver, Kidneys and Directing Vessel channels.

Chinese medicine talks about 'throat' in general without distinguishing pharynx (related to both respiratory and digestive systems) from larynx (pertaining to the respiratory system). There are, however, signs that the ancient Chinese doctors were aware of such differentiation. For example, even as early as 100 BC, the

'Spiritual Axis' said in [chapter 69](#): *'The throat is the passage for food and drink; the throat is also where Qi goes up and down.'*¹

It is interesting that the Chinese text uses two different terms in this sentence: *Yan-hou* for passage of food and *Hou-long* for passage of Qi; both are translated as 'throat' in modern texts.

Bearing in mind the dual function of the throat in respect of respiratory and digestive systems, one can generally differentiate two broad types of throat problems: one related to the respiratory system and in Chinese medicine to the Lungs and Kidney channels, and the other related to the digestive system and in Chinese medicine to the Stomach and Large Intestine channels. In adults, chronic sore throats are more commonly related to the Lung and Kidney channels, and in children more commonly to the Stomach and Large Intestine channels.

With regard to Heat and Cold, the throat is prone only to Heat (whether Full or Empty) and does not have any Cold patterns.

WHY we ask

I generally ask about throat symptoms to confirm either a pattern of Heat (because the throat is an area of concentration of Heat) or a pattern of Qi stagnation.

I usually ask about neck symptoms to confirm the presence of a Liver pattern such as Liver-Qi stagnation or Liver-Yang rising, which, barring invasion of external Cold, are the most common causes of chronic neck ache.

WHEN we ask

It is useful to ask about throat symptoms when there is Heat (Full or Empty) or Qi stagnation. If no earlier mention of throat symptoms has been made, I generally ask about them towards the end of the consultation. I always ask about the throat when I suspect a pattern of rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel.

HOW we ask

I usually ask patients whether they experience a feeling of tightness in the throat or a sensation of having a lump in the throat. If the patient speaks of discomfort in the neck, it is important to ask him or her to point clearly to the area involved: the sides of the neck are influenced by the Gall-Bladder channel and often Liver patterns, while the back of the neck is influenced by the Bladder channel.

The following throat and neck signs will be discussed:

1. Throat
 - a) Sore throat
 - b) Dry throat
 - c) Itchy throat
 - d) Hoarse voice
 - e) Feeling of obstruction in the throat
 - f) Swollen and red tonsils
2. Neck
 - a) Goitre
 - b) Painful or stiff neck

1. THROAT

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 59

a) Sore throat

Both acute and chronic sore throat are due to Heat, which may be Full or Empty; however, we should always check this symptom with the findings from observation, especially in acute cases. A redness of the pharynx confirms the presence of Heat, especially Full Heat.

When diagnosing sore throat, the first thing to establish is whether it is of external or internal origin, and the clinical significance of this symptom will therefore be analysed according to this distinction.

i) Sore throat of external origin

A sore throat of external origin has a sudden onset and short duration. In external invasions of Wind a sore throat generally points to Wind-Heat rather than Wind-Cold, especially if it is very severe. Other symptoms include aversion to cold, fever (or body hot to touch), headache, sneezing and Floating-Rapid pulse.

ii) Sore throat of internal origin

A sore throat from internal origin is usually due to Heat, which may be Full or Empty; in general, the sore

throat from Full Heat is very severe and the throat is red and swollen whereas that from Empty Heat is less severe, worse in the evening and associated with dryness. However, a chronic sore throat also may arise from a long-standing Yin deficiency, without Empty Heat.

In adults, the most common chronic sore throat is that from Kidney- and/or Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. This sore throat is not very severe, is worse in the evening and is associated with dryness of the throat and other Yin deficiency manifestations. A chronic sore throat also may be caused simply by Qi and Yin deficiency without Empty Heat; in this case the sore throat is mild, comes in bouts, is caused by overwork and is associated with other Qi and Yin deficiency manifestations.

In some cases patients complain of a 'sore throat' that comes and goes according to the emotional state. If there is no redness inside the throat and there are no other signs of Heat, it may be due to stagnation of Qi (of the Liver or Lungs) from emotional problems.

In children, external Wind-Heat has a stronger tendency than Wind-Cold to cause interior Heat if not cleared properly after the initial stages. It is very likely to give rise to residual pathogenic factors. When a child presents with a recurrent, chronic sore throat, the two most common causes are either residual Heat in the Lung channel following an invasion of Wind-Heat or an accumulation of Heat in the Stomach and Large Intestine channels due to retention of food. In the case of residual Heat in the Lung channel, the child will present with a history of repeated invasion of Wind-Heat, usually treated with antibiotics; other manifestations may include a cough, thirst, a feeling of heat, red cheeks and disturbed sleep. In the case of sore throat from accumulation of Heat in the Stomach and Large Intestine channels, there will be no history of repeated invasions of Wind-Heat, but a succession of digestive upsets such as vomiting and regurgitation of food. Other manifestations may include abdominal pain, constipation, epigastric pain and disturbed sleep.



TREATMENT

Points for sore throat of external origin (Wind-Heat): LI-4 Hegu, LU-11 Shaoshang.

Points for sore throat of internal origin: KI-6 Zhaohai, LU-7 Lieque.

SORE THROAT

- Invasion of external Wind-Heat: sore throat with acute onset
- Full-Heat in Stomach and Intestines: severe sore throat with swelling
- Kidney- and/or Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat: chronic mild sore throat
- Severe Qi and Yin deficiency: chronic mild sore throat aggravated by overwork
- Residual Heat in Lung channel or Heat in Stomach and Large Intestine channel: recurrent, chronic sore throat in children
- Qi stagnation (Liver or Lungs): chronic 'sore throat' that comes and goes

b) Dry throat

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

Excluding external invasions of Wind-Heat which may cause a dry throat, the most common cause of chronic dryness of the throat is a deficiency of Yin of the Lung and/or Kidneys: in fact, in these situations, a dry throat is an important symptom confirming the diagnosis of Yin deficiency. A chronic dryness of the throat from Full Heat may be related to the Stomach channel, but this is much less common than the former type.

Chronic dryness of the throat also may be related to the Liver and Gall-Bladder channels and caused by Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder or by the Lesser Yang syndrome within the Six Stages or the Gall-Bladder Heat pattern at the Qi level within the Four Levels.



TREATMENT

Chronic dryness of the throat: LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Directing Vessel).

DRY THROAT

- External invasion of Wind-Heat
- Lung-Yin deficiency
- Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Stomach-Heat
- Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder
- Lesser Yang Pattern (Six Stages)
- Gall-Bladder Heat (Four Levels)

c) Itchy throat

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#)

Itchiness of the throat with sudden onset is always related to invasion of Wind, which may be Wind-Cold, Wind-Heat or Wind-Dryness. Chronic itchiness of the throat is usually due to Lung-Yin deficiency or Lung Dryness;

in this case the itchy feeling of the throat is worse in the evening and is associated with a desire to drink water in small sips.

d) Hoarse voice

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 53](#)

In acute cases, hoarse voice is due to either external invasion of Wind-Heat or Lung-Heat, which may develop from such an invasion. In invasions of external Wind-Heat rather than Wind-Cold because the throat is a place where Heat easily accumulates. In such cases, a hoarse voice is accompanied by a sore throat, aversion to cold, fever, a Red tongue in the front or sides and a Floating-Rapid pulse.

A hoarse voice also may occur with acute Lung-Heat after an invasion of Wind-Heat: in such a case, the hoarse voice will be accompanied by a sore throat, a feeling of blockage of the throat, cough with scanty-yellow sputum, chest pain, a Red tongue with dry-yellow coating and an Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

In chronic cases, by far the most common cause of a hoarse voice is a deficiency of Yin of both Lungs and Kidneys; in such cases, a hoarse voice is accompanied by a dry throat at night, an itchy throat, weak voice, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, a tongue without coating and a Floating-Empty pulse. This pattern is more common in the elderly.

A less common cause of a chronic hoarse voice (also in the elderly) is an accumulation of Phlegm and Blood stasis in the throat, in which case there will also be a sore throat, a feeling of obstruction of the throat, thickening of the vocal cords, nodules on the vocal cords, a swelling of the throat, a Purple tongue and a Wiry pulse.

HOARSE VOICE

- Invasion of Wind-Heat: sore throat, sudden onset, aversion to cold, fever, Red tongue, Floating-Rapid pulse
- Lung-Heat: sore throat, feeling of blockage of the throat, cough with scanty-yellow sputum, chest pain, Red tongue with a dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse
- Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency: dry throat at night, itchy throat, weak voice, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse
- Phlegm and Blood stasis in the throat: sore throat, feeling of obstruction of the throat, thickening of the vocal cords, nodules on the vocal cords, swelling of the throat, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse

e) Feeling of obstruction in the throat

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 59

The feeling of obstruction in the throat may be compared with having a piece of meat lodged in the throat; it cannot be swallowed down or coughed up, but there is no redness, no pain and no swelling of the throat. It is commonly referred to as the Plum Stone Syndrome, although the first reference to this syndrome in the 'Prescriptions of the Golden Cabinet' (*Jin Gui Yao Lue*) mentions a piece of meat rather than a plum stone.

This symptom is nearly always caused by a stagnation of Qi due to emotional problems; modern Chinese textbooks always relate this to stagnation of Liver-Qi and emotional problems such as anger, repressed anger or frustration, but it also may be due to Lung-Qi stagnation and failure of Lung-Qi to descend caused by emotions such as worry, sadness or grief. Whatever the emotion or the channel involved, when due to Qi stagnation the feeling of a foreign body in the throat comes and goes according to the emotional state of the patient.

A feeling of obstruction in the throat also may be due to rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel. In such a case it would be accompanied by symptoms throughout the course of this channel such as abdominal fullness and/or pain, menstrual irregularities in women, tightness of the chest, anxiety and palpitations.

However, stagnation of Qi and rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel are not the only possible causes of a feeling of obstruction in the throat. This symptom also may be caused by deficiency of Yin of the Lung and/or Kidneys. In this case, the feeling of a foreign body in the throat is less severe than in the previous case; it is worse in the evening and is aggravated by overwork.

FEELING OF OBSTRUCTION IN THE THROAT

- Liver- or Lung-Qi stagnation: severe, comes and goes according to mood
- Rebellious-Qi in the Penetrating Vessel: worse in pregnancy or before menstruation
- Lung- and/or Kidney-Yin deficiency: mild, worse in the evening, aggravated by overwork

f) Swollen and red tonsils

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 59; Part 1 Observation, Chapter 10

The tonsils are influenced by the Lung, Stomach and Large Intestine channels and are prone to Heat or Toxic Heat.

i) Acute conditions

In acute conditions, redness and swelling of the tonsils may occur with an invasion of Wind-Heat; indeed, this sign always indicates that the pathogenic factor is Wind-Heat rather than Wind-Cold. However, a swelling and redness of the tonsils with an invasion of Wind also indicates that there is Toxic Heat of external origin (this is an important diagnostic differentiation in the choice of herbs, as we will need to address the Toxic Heat).

ii) Chronic conditions

In chronic conditions, redness and swelling of the tonsils indicates either Heat (which may be Full or Empty) or Toxic Heat. These may affect the Stomach or Large Intestine channels. In children, chronic tonsillitis is nearly always related to residual Heat or Toxic Heat (following repeated invasions of Wind-Heat, especially if treated with antibiotics). In adults, chronic tonsillitis often is due to Empty-Heat in the Lung and/or Stomach channel.

Case History

A 12-year-old boy had been suffering from recurrent tonsillitis since he was 18 months old. At that time he suffered a severe attack of acute tonsillitis for which he was prescribed antibiotics; the acute infection appeared to go, but he has suffered recurrent attacks, each time treated with antibiotics, ever since. At the time of consultation, apart from the recurrent tonsillitis, his main symptoms were a constantly blocked nose, recurrent sore throats, earache, cough and catarrh, and were aggravated in winter and alleviated in summer. His tonsils and adenoids were removed 9 months before the consultation, and this had brought about only a very slight improvement.

On asking about his digestive system, he said he suffered from occasional epigastric pain, thirst, a sticky taste and nausea. His head felt heavy and muzzy, especially in the mornings. His pulse was Weak in general, and his tongue was slightly Red, slightly Swollen and with a thin-sticky-yellow coating.

Diagnosis

This case is a classic example of residual pathogenic factor in a child. After an acute infection, especially if treated with antibiotics, children are very prone to the development of a pathogenic factor which predisposes

the child to further infections; these are treated with more antibiotics, the residual pathogenic factor becomes further entrenched and this establishes a vicious circle which may last for years. In this case the first attack of tonsillitis, treated with antibiotics when he was 18 months old, was obviously followed by the retention of a pathogenic factor, in this case Damp-Heat in the head. Apart from the blocked nose, the earache, chronic tonsillitis and sore throat, the presence is confirmed by the epigastric pain, thirst, sticky taste, nausea and sticky-yellow tongue coating.

In this case, due to the long duration of the problem, the Dampness has weakened the Spleen and the condition is therefore a combined Full/Empty condition with Damp-Heat in the head and the Middle Burner and Spleen-Qi deficiency, which is confirmed by the Weak pulse.

In this case, the Root of the condition is the residual pathogenic factor – that is, Damp-Heat in the head and Middle Burner which has led to the development of Spleen-Qi deficiency. The treatment principle, therefore, is firstly and primarily to eliminate Damp-Heat from both the head and the Middle Burner; this treatment may take several months, and it is only after clearing Damp-Heat that we should turn our attention to tonifying Spleen-Qi.

2. NECK

The following neck signs will be discussed:

- a) Goitre
- b) Painful and stiff neck

a) Goitre

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 59](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

A discussion of goitre is relevant in interrogation as well as observation when there is a history of it or when the patient has had a goitre but has undergone an operation to remove it.

By itself, goitre is always a sign of Phlegm. Very frequently, the pathology of Phlegm is combined with Qi stagnation in the throat; this is not always related to the Liver but may be related to the Lungs and Stomach too. In chronic cases, there is always an underlying deficiency of Qi and/or Yin, which may cause the goitre to go up and down.

Goitre is closely related to the Liver and Lung channel, and Liver-Fire combined with Phlegm is a frequent cause

of it. Finally, in chronic cases, Phlegm may also combine with Blood stasis to cause goitre. In case of Liver-Fire and Blood stasis the goitre would be hard; in all other cases, it would feel soft to palpation.

GOITRE

- Phlegm: large, soft goitre
- Qi stagnation with Phlegm: irritability, depression, goitre size varying according to mood
- Yin deficiency with Phlegm: small goitre, tiredness
- Liver-Fire with Phlegm: hard goitre, irritability
- Liver-Blood stasis with Phlegm: hard goitre, Purple tongue

b) Painful or stiff neck

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 62](#)

The most common cause of a painful or stiff neck is retention of Wind and Dampness in the muscles of the neck, which is a type of Painful Obstruction Syndrome.

Another common cause of a painful or stiff neck is Liver-Qi stagnation, which is usually due to stress, frustration and resentment being held in. Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Wind may also cause a stiff or painful neck; this is more common in the elderly, often, but not necessarily, associated with hypertension.

A less common cause of a stiff or mildly painful neck is a Kidney deficiency, being due to Kidney-Yang not nourishing the Bladder channel in the neck, causing only chronic stiff neck and usually seen only in the elderly.

Invasion of external Wind-Cold causes an acute stiff neck with all the other characteristic symptoms of external invasions such as aversion to cold and sneezing.



TREATMENT

Neckache from Tai Yang channels: S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62

Shenmai (Governing Vessel), BL-10 Tianzhu.

Neckache from Shao Yang channels: T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-20 Fengchi.

PAINFUL OR STIFF NECK

- Wind and Dampness in the muscles of the neck: pain and stiffness, reacting to weather
- Liver-Qi stagnation: comes and goes according to the mood, not reacting to weather
- Liver-Yang rising: intense stiffness, dizziness, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Wind: stiffness, tremor
- Kidney deficiency: chronic, more common in the elderly
- Invasion of Wind-Cold: sudden onset, acute, accompanied by aversion to cold and sneezing



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how we ask about the neck.
- That nearly all the channels converge on the neck, and it is therefore an important diagnostic area.
- The clinical significance of a sore throat from external or internal origins, a dry throat, itchy throat, hoarse voice or feeling of obstruction in the throat.
- That the tonsils are influenced by the Lungs, Stomach and Large Intestines and are prone to Heat or Toxic Heat.
- The clinical significance of goitre or a painful or stiff neck.

END NOTE

1. 1981 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine—Spiritual Axis (Ling Shu Jing 灵枢经). People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published c.100 BC, p. 125.

Body 37

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask

When we ask

How we ask

Aches in the whole body

Pain in the joints

Lower backache

Numbness/tingling

Itching

Loss of weight

Obesity

Questions about the body concern mostly pain and numbness. The chest and abdomen are discussed in [Chapter 38](#) and limbs in [Chapter 39](#).

WHY we ask

Apart from the question regarding lower backache which I ask every time I suspect a Kidney deficiency, questions about the body mainly concern symptoms affecting the whole body and do not pertain to any specific area, such as pain, numbness or itching of the whole body or loss of weight or obesity.

WHEN we ask

Apart from the question about backache, I generally ask questions about the body only if relevant. In particular, the question about gain or loss of weight is important to give us an idea of the state of Blood and Yin and of the Stomach and Spleen.

HOW we ask

The questions about the body concerning numbness, pain or itching are self-explanatory. The following body symptoms will be discussed:

1. Aches in the whole body
2. Pain in the joints
3. Lower backache
4. Numbness/tingling
5. Itching
6. Loss of weight
7. Obesity

1. ACHES IN THE WHOLE BODY

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 68](#)

By 'aches in the whole body,' I refer to aches or pain in most of the joints and muscles, which is not a common symptom. The most important distinction is that according to onset. Aches or pain in the whole body with sudden onset is due to invasion of external Wind and is therefore accompanied by aversion to cold, shivers, fever and Floating pulse.

In chronic conditions, the most common cause of aches in the whole body is deficiency of Qi and Blood. In this case, it is accompanied by pronounced lassitude and is ameliorated by rest.

Aches in the muscles of the body and especially the limbs are usually due to retention of Dampness in the muscles and are frequently seen in chronic fatigue syndrome; in this case the muscle ache is accompanied by a pronounced feeling of heaviness of the limbs and body. Aches in all the muscles with a hot sensation of the body to palpation are due to Stomach-Heat.

Pain in the arms and shoulders experienced only when walking is due to Liver-Qi stagnation.

In women after childbirth, pain in the whole body is due to Blood deficiency if it is dull or to Blood stasis if it is severe and stabbing.

ACHES IN THE WHOLE BODY

- Deficiency of Qi and Blood: lassitude, ameliorated by rest
- Retention of Dampness in the muscles: feeling of heaviness of the limbs and body
- Stomach-Heat: hot sensation of the body
- Liver-Qi stagnation: pain in the arms and shoulders when walking
- Blood deficiency: after childbirth
- Blood stasis: stabbing pain after childbirth

2. PAIN IN THE JOINTS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 68](#)

Pain in the joints is due to invasion of Wind, Dampness or Cold in the channels of the joints. Joint ache from Wind moves from joint to joint; joint pain from Dampness is fixed and characterized by swelling and numbness; joint pain from Cold is fixed, usually in one joint only and the pain is intense.

In chronic cases, any of the above pathogenic factors can transform into Heat, Dampness is formed and Damp-Heat accumulates in the joints causing chronic pain. Severe stabbing pain in the joints may be due to Blood stasis.

JOINT PAIN

- Invasion of Wind: wandering pain
- Invasion of Dampness: pain with swelling and feeling of heaviness
- Invasion of Cold: severe pain in single joint
- Damp-Heat: pain, swelling, redness
- Blood stasis: severe, stabbing pain, rigidity

3. LOWER BACKACHE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 67](#)

Acute pain in the lower back is due to either sprain or invasion of Cold. If it is due to sprain, the pain is intense, with pronounced stiffness, and is improved by rest and aggravated by movement; this pain is due to local stagnation of Qi and Blood. If the pain is due to invasion of Cold, it is worse with rest, usually worse in the mornings, and alleviated by gentle movement. Chronic lower backache is due to a Kidney deficiency, in which case the backache is alleviated by rest and aggravated by overwork and excessive sexual activity. In many cases of chronic lower backache, there is a combination of

the above three factors; for example, an underlying Kidney deficiency (causing a chronic dull ache) predisposes the patient to invasion of Cold or sprain and therefore to periodic acute attacks.

Pain of the lower back extending to the upper back is usually due to a combination of Kidney deficiency and Liver-Qi stagnation.



TREATMENT

Acute backache from sprain (Qi and/or Blood stagnation):

BL-60 Kunlun, Ah Shi points lower back with cupping, BL-25 Dachangshu.

Backache from Cold: BL-23 Shenshu, BL-26 Guanyuanshu, BL-40 Weizhong, moxa.

Chronic backache from Kidney deficiency: BL-23 Shenshu, Shiqizhuixia, BL-26 Guanyuanshu, KI-4 Dazhong.

LOWER BACKACHE

- Sprain: acute lower backache ameliorated by rest
- Invasion of Cold: acute lower backache aggravated by rest
- Kidney deficiency: chronic lower backache ameliorated by rest
- Kidney deficiency and Liver-Qi stagnation: chronic lower backache extending to the upper back

4. NUMBNESS/TINGLING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64, 65, 66, and 68](#)

Numbness or tingling may be due to three main causes: Blood deficiency, Phlegm or internal Wind. With Blood deficiency, there is numbness or tingling of both arms or legs or only hands or feet: this is more common in women. Phlegm may cause numbness or tingling in one or both limbs usually accompanied by a feeling of heaviness. Internal Wind usually causes unilateral numbness in a limb; if it affects the first three fingers in an old person it may indicate the possibility of impending Wind-Stroke.

NUMBNESS/TINGLING

- Blood deficiency: both limbs, more in women
- Phlegm: with feeling of heaviness
- Internal Wind: usually unilateral

5. ITCHING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64, 65, 66, and 68](#)

The three main causes of itching are generally Wind, Dampness or Heat: these three pathogenic factors cause intense itching. Blood deficiency also may cause itching, which would be less intense than the three above-mentioned pathogenic factors.

Itching caused by Wind is very intense, and it occurs either in different parts of the body, moving from one place to another, or in the whole body. The itching due to Wind may be accompanied by a rash, but it also may occur without any external skin signs. Itching caused by Wind also may be accompanied by dry skin because Wind itself has a drying effect. In itching caused by Wind the patient has an irresistible desire to scratch; the skin may break and bleed but it heals soon after scratching.

Itching caused by Dampness is more localized, usually occurring only in specific places such as the axilla or the genital region or the hands or feet. It is accompanied by the appearance of vesicles and the skin breaks after scratching, oozing a fluid that may be white or yellow according to whether Dampness is associated with Cold or Heat. Itching caused by Damp-Heat is more intense and is characterized by the appearance of yellow vesicles or pustules. In severe, chronic cases the pustules may fester and ooze pus and blood.

Itching caused by Heat is usually accompanied by a red rash that may occur either locally or in the whole body.

Itching caused by Blood deficiency is less intense; the skin is dry and scaly, and the itching is worse at night.

Itching caused by Toxic Heat is very intense and is accompanied by the appearance of furuncles or festering ulcers which ooze pus and blood. Toxic Heat in the skin is often a complication of chronic eczema when the skin becomes infected.

Under certain circumstances itching can be a normal manifestation that occurs during healing of wounds or ulcers.

ITCHING

- Wind: intense generalized itching
- Dampness: localized itching, damp skin
- Blood-Heat: itching with a red rash
- Blood deficiency: mild generalized itching with dry skin
- Toxic Heat: intense itching with pustules
- Itching during healing of wounds or ulcers: normal

6. LOSS OF WEIGHT

The two most common causes of loss of weight are Blood or Yin deficiency; other causes include Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency, Stomach-Heat and Liver-Fire. Although Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency normally tend to make a person overweight because they lead to Dampness and Phlegm, in severe cases (such as in anorexia) they may lead to loss of weight because the body is not nourished by the food essences.

7. OBESITY

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 68](#)

When not purely due to over-eating, obesity is generally caused by retention of Damp-Phlegm occurring against a background of Spleen-Qi and/or Kidney-Yang deficiency.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how we ask about the body which pathogenically is usually affected by pain or numbness.
- The clinical significance of aches in the whole body, pain in the joints, lower backache, numbness/tingling, itching, weight loss and obesity.

38

Chest and Abdomen

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Chest**Why we ask****When we ask****How we ask***Cough**Case History**Chest pain**Pain in the ribs**Feeling of oppression of the chest**Feeling of heat in the chest**Palpitations**Case History***Abdomen****Why we ask****When we ask****How we ask***Sensations**Areas of abdominal pain**Case histories*

Interrogation in relation to diagnoses of the chest and abdomen are discussed separately below.

1. CHEST

The chest, or thorax, refers to the part of the body enclosed by the ribs and breast bone. From the Chinese point of view, there is a difference between the front part of the chest, which is under the influence of the Heart and Lungs, and the sides of the chest, which are under the influence of the Liver and Gall-Bladder. The front of the chest is also the area where the Gathering Qi (*Zong Qi*) is concentrated. (See [Fig. 38.1.](#))

WHY we ask

It is necessary to ask about chest symptoms because some of them occur frequently in practice. In particular,

symptoms often manifest in the chest; for example, a feeling of oppression may be felt there or palpitations, which often derive from emotional stress.

Patients do not often volunteer information on chest symptoms unless we ask. For example, in my experience, few patients will actually describe experiencing a feeling of oppression in the chest.

In addition, both the tongue and the pulse frequently reflect a pathology of the chest: a purple area in the tongue's chest area (see [Fig. 23.10](#)), for example, or a pulse that is Weak and Deep on both Front positions.

WHEN we ask

Chest symptoms often reflect very common pathologies such as Liver-Qi stagnation, Phlegm in the chest and Heart-Blood deficiency. Therefore, I specifically ask about chest symptoms quite early in the interrogation as the patient is describing his or her symptoms.

HOW we ask

It is important to be sensitive when asking questions regarding the chest because people often fear that if we ask about the chest we suspect a heart pathology. Besides this, some typical Chinese expressions are not used by Western patients and we should therefore phrase the question in a way that is understandable to the patient. For example, few patients will actually use the expression 'feeling of oppression of the chest'; they will probably describe a 'feeling of tightness of the chest' or say a feeling was 'like having a weight on the chest'.

'Palpitations' is another example of the importance of asking questions in a way that the patient can understand. Most people think that palpitations are synonymous with tachycardia – that is, the heart beating faster than normal. We should therefore explain to the patient that 'palpitations' simply means an uncomfortable sensation of being aware of one's

heartbeat. One could have tachycardia and not have palpitations.

The following chest symptoms will be discussed:

- Cough
- Chest pain
- Pain in the ribs
- Feeling of oppression of the chest
- Feeling of heat in the chest
- Palpitations

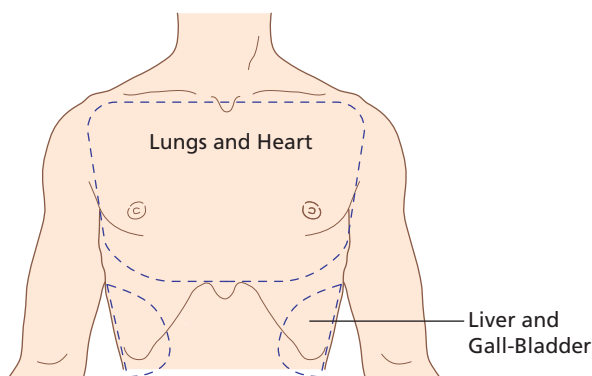


Figure 38.1. Chest areas.

a) Cough

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 53](#)

When a patient presents with a cough, we must first of all establish whether it is an acute or a chronic cough. By 'acute', we mean a cough that had a sudden onset and may continue for a few days or weeks. By chronic, we mean either a cough that began insidiously, without a previous invasion of Wind and persisted for months or years, or one which began with an exterior invasion of Wind and persisted for months or years.

i) Acute cough

An acute cough may have any of three causes. It may be an acute cough in the very beginning stages of an invasion of Wind, when the pathogenic factor is still on the Exterior; it may be an acute cough with the pathogenic factor in the Interior following an external invasion; and third, it may be an acute cough caused by a residual pathogenic factor following an external invasion.



TREATMENT

Acute cough in invasion of Wind: L.I.- 4 Hegu, LU-7 Lieque, BL-12 Fengmen.

Acute cough with the pathogenic factor in the Interior: LU-7 Lieque, LU-5 Chize, LU-1 Zhongfu, BL-13 Feishu.

Acute cough caused by a residual pathogenic factor: Same as previous.

ACUTE COUGH

- External invasion of Wind: acute cough, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, runny nose, Floating pulse
- Heat or Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs: acute, barking cough with expectoration of yellow mucus, feeling of heat, thirst, Overflowing-Rapid pulse
- Residual dryness and Phlegm in the Lungs: acute, dry cough with difficult expectoration of scanty sputum after repeated bouts of dry coughing, tickling sensation of the throat

ii) Chronic cough

A chronic cough is generally due to either chronic retention of Phlegm in the Lungs (Phlegm which may be combined with Dampness, Heat or Dryness) or Qi and/or Yin deficiency of the Lungs.

A very common type of chronic cough is due to Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs which is characterized by the expectoration of profuse, white sputum which is easy to expectorate, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a Swollen tongue with a sticky coating and a very Slippery pulse. When Phlegm combines with Heat in the Lungs the cough has a louder sound and is characterized by the expectoration of yellow sputum, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat and a Red and Swollen tongue and a Slippery-Rapid pulse.

A common type of chronic cough in the elderly is that due to Dry-Phlegm in the Lungs, which is characterized by a chronic, dry cough with a weak sound and the occasional, difficult expectoration of scanty sputum.

A chronic cough due to a deficiency of Lung-Qi or -Yin is characterized by a slight cough with a weak sound, accompanied by the signs of Qi or Yin deficiency.



TREATMENT

Cough from Damp-Phlegm: LU-5 Chize, LU-1 Zhongfu, BL-13 Feishu, ST-40 Fenglong.

Cough from Phlegm-Heat: LU-5 Chize, LU-1 Zhongfu, L.I.-11 Quchi, BL-13 Feishu, ST-40 Fenglong.

Cough from Dry Phlegm: LU-1 Zhongfu, LU-7 Lieque, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-6 Zhaohai.

CHRONIC COUGH

- Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs: chronic cough with easy expectoration of profuse, white sputum, Swollen tongue with sticky coating
- Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs: chronic cough with expectoration of profuse yellow or greenish sputum, feeling of heat, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse
- Dry-Phlegm in the Lungs: chronic dry cough with occasional, difficult expectoration of scanty sputum, dry throat, Swollen tongue with a dry coating
- Lung-Qi deficiency: chronic, slight cough with weak sound, weak voice, Empty pulse
- Lung-Yin deficiency: chronic, dry cough, dry throat in the evening, night-sweating, tongue without coating.

Case History

A 48-year-old woman had been suffering from a persistent cough for 6 months. She thought she had some phlegm in the throat that was difficult to expectorate so that the cough was often dry. When she did expectorate some sputum, it was thick, sticky and white. She also complained of breathlessness and a feeling of tightness and oppression of the chest. A chest specialist had diagnosed bronchiectasis.

She was thin and slightly built and had experienced loss of weight for the past 2 years. Her complexion was very dull and sallow. She also suffered from a general cold feeling, cold hands and feet, constipation and a yellow vaginal discharge.

Her tongue-body colour was normal, but the tongue body was Swollen; the back of the tongue had a rootless, yellow coating but no 'spirit'. Her pulse was Weak in general, especially in both the Rear positions, but also slightly Slippery.

Diagnosis

The cough with expectoration of thick-sticky-white sputum, together with the breathlessness and feeling of tightness and oppression of the chest, indicates the presence of Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs, which is confirmed by the swelling of the tongue body and the Slippery pulse. The general cold feeling, cold hands and feet, constipation and Weak Rear pulse positions indicate Kidney-Yang deficiency, which obviously contributed to the formation of Phlegm. The Kidney deficiency is also evidenced by the absence of 'spirit'

on the root of the tongue. Besides Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs, there is also Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner which causes the yellow vaginal discharge.

The loss of weight which occurred in the previous 2 years and the rootless tongue coating point to the beginning of a situation of Kidney-Yin deficiency, which may sometimes develop from Kidney-Yang deficiency.

The treatment should concentrate first on resolving Damp-Phlegm and stimulating the descending of Lung-Qi and second on tonifying the Kidneys.

b) Chest pain

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

Here, 'chest' indicates the front of the chest. A pain in this area is usually due to either the Heart or Lung channel and always denotes a Full condition (even though this itself may derive from an underlying Empty condition).

Chest pain can be differentiated according to its character. A fixed, pricking, stabbing or needle-like pain indicates Blood stasis. Chest pain accompanied by a feeling of distension of the chest itself and the hypochondrium indicates Qi stagnation and is usually accompanied by sighing and irritability. An intermittent, chronic chest pain that comes and goes also indicates Blood stasis but suggests an underlying Empty condition of Qi or Yang deficiency.

A stabbing or pricking chest pain indicates Blood stasis affecting the Heart channel (especially if it radiates down the left arm), and this often occurs against a background of Heart-Yang deficiency: it falls into the category of Chest Painful Obstruction Syndrome.

Chest pain accompanied by cough with expectoration of profuse yellow sputum is due to Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs and may be seen in acute lung conditions, such as bronchitis, pneumonia or pleuritis.

A chest pain in a large area of the chest together with a cough, breathlessness and a red face indicates Lung-Heat. Chest pain extending to the hypochondrial region may be due to Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder channel.

Pain in the heart region on the left side of the chest indicates either Heart-Blood stasis or Phlegm obstructing the Heart channel.

Chest pain extending to the upper back is usually due to Phlegm or Blood stasis.



TREATMENT

Chest pain from Heart-Blood stasis: P-6 Neiguan, ST-40 Fenglong.
 Chest pain from Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs: LU-5 Chize, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-40 Fenglong.
 Chest pain from Lung-Heat: LU-5 Chize, L.I.-11 Quchi.
 Chest pain from Liver-Qi stagnation: G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, T.B.-6 Zhigou.
 Chest pain from Damp-Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder: G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, T.B.-6 Zhigou, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

CHEST PAIN

- Heart-Blood stasis: stabbing chest pain
- Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs: chest pain with cough and profuse, yellow sputum
- Lung-Heat: chest pain with cough and breathlessness
- Liver-Qi stagnation: distending chest and hypochondrial pain
- Blood stasis with underlying Empty condition: intermittent chronic chest pain
- Damp-Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder: chest and hypochondrial pain with feeling of heaviness and sticky taste

c) Pain in the ribs

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

‘Pain in the ribs’ refers to pain on the lateral aspect of the rib cage above the hypochondrial area.

The most common patterns causing pain in the ribs are:

- Liver-Qi stagnation: pain in the ribs with a pronounced feeling of distension
- Blood stasis: severe, stabbing pain
- Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder: pain in the ribs with a feeling of oppression and heaviness

d) Feeling of oppression of the chest

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

A feeling of oppression of the chest is the translation of the Chinese term *Xiong Men*. Western patients, at least in Anglo-Saxon countries, would seldom use this term and report this symptom as a feeling of tightness, discomfort in the chest or sensation of having a weight on the chest.

A feeling of oppression of the chest accompanied by a cough and expectoration of phlegm indicates retention

of Phlegm in the Lungs, which is the most common cause of this symptom. A feeling of oppression of the chest without a cough and without expectoration of phlegm and accompanied by slight breathlessness, sighing and a feeling of a lump in the throat indicates stagnation of Lung-Qi with Lung-Qi failing to descend; this is usually caused by emotional problems such as sadness or worry. Although a feeling of a lump in the throat is usually related to Liver-Qi stagnation, stagnation of Lung-Qi caused by emotional problems is a very frequent cause of this symptom together with a feeling of oppression of the chest.

Another very common cause of a feeling of oppression of the chest is Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel and is more common in women. However, before diagnosing Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel, we should check whether the feeling of oppression of the chest is accompanied by other relevant symptoms such as abdominal distension or fullness, pain or fullness around the umbilicus, or epigastric tightness.

In a few cases, a severe stagnation of Liver-Qi from emotional problems also may cause a feeling of oppression of the chest.

FEELING OF OPPRESSION OF THE CHEST

- Phlegm in the Lungs: slight breathlessness, sighing
- Stagnation of Lung-Qi: sighing, feeling of lump in the throat
- Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel: abdominal fullness, epigastric fullness
- Severe Liver-Qi stagnation: depression, irritability

e) Feeling of heat in the chest

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

Excluding external invasions of Wind-Heat, a feeling of heat in the chest is due to Full or Empty Heat of the Lung or Heart channels. If there is a feeling of heat in the chest, accompanied by thirst, insomnia, palpitations and agitation, it indicates Heart-Fire. If there is a feeling of heat in the evening, dry mouth at night, insomnia, night-sweating and five-palm heat, it is due to Heart Empty Heat.

A feeling of heat in the chest accompanied by a cough, hot hands, a red face and expectoration of yellow mucus is due to Lung-Heat; if it is accompanied by night-sweating, a feeling of heat in the afternoon, five-palm heat, a dry throat at night and a dry cough it indicates Lung Empty Heat.

FEELING OF HEAT IN THE CHEST

- Invasion of external Wind-Heat: aversion to cold, fever, sore throat
- Heart-Fire: insomnia, palpitations, Red tip of the tongue
- Heart Empty Heat: insomnia, night-sweating, dry mouth at night
- Lung-Heat: cough, red face
- Lung Empty Heat: dry cough, night-sweating, dry throat at night

f) Palpitations

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 63

When we ask patients about palpitations, it is important to explain to them the meaning of this symptom; most patients mistakenly identify ‘palpitations’ with tachycardia – that is, the pulse beating faster than normal. In reality, palpitations are not related to the rate or speed of the pulse but simply indicate a subjective and uncomfortable sensation of being aware of one’s heartbeat.

Palpitations are a symptom which is always related to the Heart and may appear in any of the Heart patterns.

Palpitations with an acute onset may be due to external stimuli such as a fright or an overwhelming emotional upset, in which case it is called ‘fright palpitations’ (*Jing Ji*).

Palpitations that extend upwards towards the chest and throat and downwards towards the umbilicus and abdomen are called *Zheng Chong*, which I translate as ‘panic palpitations’ (literally it means ‘panic and anxiety’). This type of palpitations is due to Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel affecting the Heart and is considered a more severe type than ordinary palpitations.

Case History

A 44-year-old woman had been suffering from palpitations for 8 years. ‘Palpitations’ was just a subjective symptom of a feeling of her heart thumping in her chest and was not associated with tachycardia. The palpitations were always worse before her period. She also complained of nausea and an epigastric pain which was experienced just under the sternum, a sticky taste and a feeling of lump in the throat. She also complained of experiencing a dry mouth occasionally. She occasionally suffered from tinnitus.

Her periods were basically normal, coming every 4 weeks, lasting 6 days and not painful. The only problem associated with the periods was premenstrual tension.

Her complexion was dull and sallow, without lustre, and her eyes were very dull and lacked lustre to an extreme degree.

Her tongue was of a normal colour, except for a Red tip. It had a Heart crack and, although it could not be defined as being peeled, the coating was not sufficient. Her pulse was Fine on the right and Floating-Empty on the left.

Diagnosis

The aggravation of the palpitations before the period, together with the nausea, epigastric pain under the sternum and the feeling of lump in the throat, indicate Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel, as this vessel flows through the stomach, connects with the heart, traverses the chest and goes over the throat (on its way to the face).

However, the pulse, being Fine on the right, and the dull-sallow complexion clearly show a condition of Blood deficiency, while the Floating-Empty nature of the pulse on the left side and the insufficient coating on the tongue show the beginning of Yin deficiency (of the Liver, Kidneys and Heart). In this case, therefore, the condition of Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel is secondary to the condition of Blood and Yin deficiency; in other words, the Qi of the Penetrating Vessel rebels upward *because* there is a deficiency of Blood and Yin. In fact, the Penetrating Vessel is the Sea of Blood and is therefore easily affected by Blood deficiency. The treatment principle in this case, therefore, should be to nourish Blood and Yin (of the Heart and Liver) primarily and to subdue rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel secondarily.

The Heart crack and the very dull appearance of the eyes indicate a disturbed Mind and a strong propensity to emotional problems.

2. ABDOMEN

Abdomen here refers to the area of the trunk between the diaphragm and the symphysis pubis (Fig. 38.2).

WHY we ask

Abdominal symptoms are so frequent that it is absolutely crucial to ask about them in every case, even if the patient presents with a problem in an entirely different

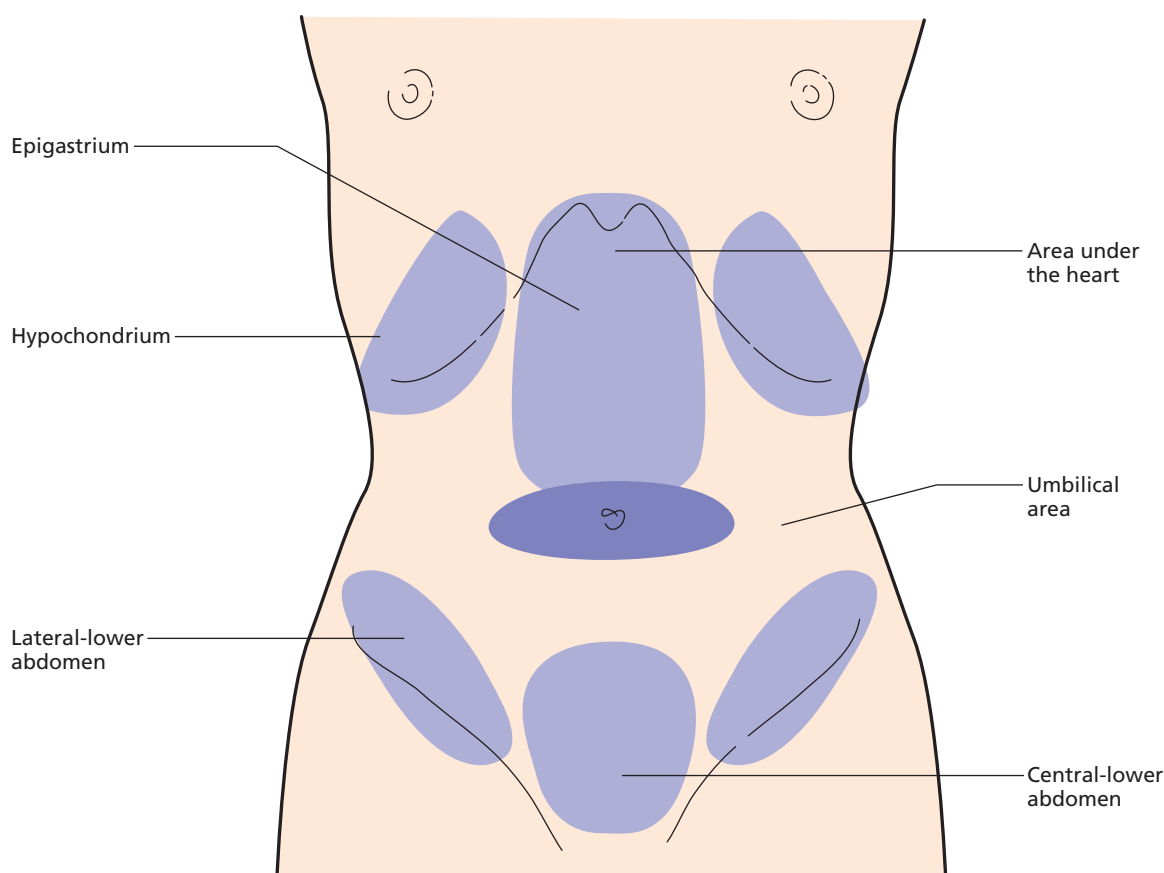


Figure 38.2. Areas of the abdomen.

area, such as headaches. The abdomen readily reflects extremely common patterns, such as Qi stagnation, Blood stasis and Dampness.

WHEN we ask

If the patient does not come specifically to consult about abdominal symptoms, I generally ask about them immediately after asking about digestive problems (related to the Stomach).

HOW we ask

It is important to be clear about the area involved because patients are often vague about the location of their abdominal symptoms. For example, someone might refer to the whole abdomen as the 'stomach'. We should therefore always make sure we ask the patient to point to the area involved.

In the case of pain, we should first let the patient describe the abdominal pain in his or her own words; only then can we ask systematically about the reaction of pain to pressure, application of heat and foods or drinks in order to establish the Full or Empty and the Hot or Cold character of the pain. When asking about the reaction of their abdominal pain to 'pressure', instead of simply asking 'Is it better with pressure or not?' which the patient would not really understand, we should ask, 'When you have the pain do you like to press the area of pain with your hands or do you dislike being touched?' We should then ask about the reaction of the abdominal pain to exposure to heat or cold and to ingestion of hot or cold drinks.

Besides this, there is also a terminology problem because few patients will actually use the term 'distension' (often described as 'bloating' in English) and even fewer the term 'stiffness'. The exact meaning of these symptoms is described below.

The discussion of abdominal symptoms will be centred first on the four most common sensations experienced in the abdomen, which are:

- distension
- pain
- fullness
- stuffiness.

After this, the various abdominal symptoms will be discussed according to areas, which are:

- the area under the xyphoid process (*Xin Xia*)
- the epigastrium
- the hypochondrium
- the umbilical area
- the central-lower abdominal area
- the right-lateral lower abdominal area
- the left-lateral lower abdominal area.

a) Sensations

The sensations discussed are:

- i) Distension
- ii) Pain
- iii) Fullness
- iv) Stuffiness

i) Distension

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

A feeling of abdominal distension (usually called 'bloating' in English) is an extremely common symptom. The following patterns most commonly cause distension of the abdomen (in order of frequency):

- Qi stagnation: severe distension
- Spleen-Qi deficiency: mild distension
- Damp-Phlegm

Besides the subjective feeling of bloating, distension is also characterized by an objective, distended, drum-like feeling on palpation.



Remember: distension is a subjective feeling of bloating, but it is also an objective sign of the abdomen; that is, the abdomen feels distended like a balloon on palpation. It is also visible on observation.

ii) Pain

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

Abdominal pain can be due to a very wide variety of conditions, some Full and some Empty. By definition, the abdominal pain from a Full condition is severe, whereas

that from an Empty condition is mild. Among the Full conditions which may cause abdominal pain are:

- Qi stagnation
- Blood stasis
- Dampness
- Retention of food
- Cold

Among the Empty conditions are:

- Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Empty Cold
- Kidney deficiency.

For a detailed discussion of the patterns causing abdominal pain in its various areas, see Part 5, [Chapter 71](#) on 'Abdominal Symptoms'.

Abdominal pain is one of the most common presenting symptoms in practice. When diagnosing abdominal pain, it is important to refer to the basic principles which allow us to differentiate Fullness from Emptiness and Heat from Cold. Abdominal pain that is alleviated by pressure indicates a deficiency while if it is aggravated by pressure or if the patient dislikes being touched in that area, it indicates a Fullness.

Abdominal pain that is alleviated by the application of heat (such as a hot water bottle) or ingestion of warm drinks indicates a Cold condition; the same is the case if it is aggravated by exposure to cold or ingestion of cold drinks. Abdominal pain that is aggravated by exposure to heat or ingestion of warm drinks indicates a Heat condition; the same is true if it is alleviated by exposure to cold (which is very rare even in Heat conditions) or ingestion of cold drinks.

iii) Fullness

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

A feeling of fullness in the abdomen is usually caused by Dampness or retention of food. Subjectively the patient feels full, as if having had a large meal, and there is a very slight feeling of nausea; objectively the abdomen feels hard on palpation.



A subjective feeling of fullness is mirrored by an objective hardness of the abdomen on palpation.

iv) Stuffiness

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

'Stuffiness' is a translation of the Chinese term *pi* (although this term has a broader meaning than simply

‘feeling of stuffiness’). A feeling of stuffiness in the abdomen is characterized by a subjective mild feeling of fullness, together with an objective soft feeling of the abdomen on palpation. This symptom is usually due to either Dampness or Heat occurring against a background of Deficiency.



A feeling of stuffiness is characterized by the contradiction between a subjective feeling of fullness and an objective, soft feeling to the abdomen on palpation.

b) Areas of abdominal pain

Before establishing the Full or Empty and Hot or Cold nature of the condition according to the abdominal symptoms, it is important to ask the patient to identify clearly the location of the problem, which is most commonly pain. Patients are often vague about the location of the pain, and we should ask them to pay attention and be exact. This difficulty is particularly evident in children who are often unable to identify the exact location of the abdominal pain.

The regions of the abdomen in Chinese medicine are as follows (see Fig. 38.2):

- area under the xyphoid process: the small area immediately below the xyphoid process, extending approximately 2 inches (50 mm) and bordered by the ribs. It is influenced by the Heart and Stomach channels and the Penetrating Vessel.
- epigastric: the area between the xyphoid process and the umbilicus but excluding the hypochondrial area. It is related to the Stomach and Spleen channels.
- hypochondrial: the two areas below the rib cage. This area is influenced by the Liver and Gall-bladder channels.
- umbilical: the area around the umbilicus. It is influenced by the Spleen, Liver, Kidney and Small Intestine channels.
- central-lower abdominal (*Xiao Fu*): the area between the umbilicus and the symphysis pubis. This area is influenced by the Liver, Kidney, Bladder and Large Intestine channels and by the Directing Vessel; in women, it is also influenced by the Uterus.
- right-lateral-lower abdominal and left-lateral-lower abdominal (*Shao Fu*): the lateral areas of the lower abdomen. This area is influenced by the Liver and Large Intestine channels and the Penetrating Vessel.

The diagnosis of abdominal problems and especially abdominal pain is much more complex than that of the

epigastric region problems because of the large number of channels involved.

In women, it is even more complex because the lower abdomen can reflect problems of all the above channels as well as problems of the Uterus and gynaecological system. In practice it is therefore often difficult to differentiate in women whether an abdominal pain is of intestinal or gynaecological origin. This difficulty exists also in Western medicine. In Chinese medicine, however, the distinction is less important than it is in Western medicine as there is often an overlap between a pathology of the Intestines and one of the gynaecological system. For example, in women, stasis of Blood in the lower abdomen may at the same time cause painful periods and an abdominal pain of intestinal origin.

For the differentiation of various abdominal symptoms, the reader is referred to Part 5, Chapter 71. Here I will discuss the most common patterns and conditions differentiated according to their location – that is, area under the xyphoid process, epigastrium, hypochondrium, umbilical area, central-lower abdomen, right-lateral lower abdominal area and left-lateral lower abdominal area.

i) Area under the xyphoid process

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 71

The area under the xyphoid process extends approximately 2 inches (50 mm) from the xyphoid process and is bordered by the ribs. It is influenced by the Stomach, Heart and Penetrating Vessel channels, and its symptomatology often reflects emotional problems. In fact, this is an area that is very easily and frequently affected by emotional problems due to worry, fear, sadness or grief. The symptoms related to this area may include a feeling of tightness, distension, oppression, stuffiness and palpitations depending on the channel and pathology involved.

The Penetrating vessel has a strong influence on this area, causing a feeling of tightness. However, a pathology of the Penetrating Vessel can be diagnosed only if the feeling of tightness in this area is associated with other abdominal or chest sensations, such as lower abdominal fullness or pain, epigastric distension or pain and chest oppression or tightness. A typical symptom of the Penetrating Vessel in the area below the xyphoid is characterized by a feeling of ‘urgency’, anxiety and palpitations in that area. Occasionally, Western patients will describe this Penetrating Vessel symptomatology

in different and unusual ways; for example, in England, a patient may describe a feeling of 'butterflies' in this area, a feeling of 'heart cascading', 'a feeling as if the stomach was having an argument with itself' or a 'feeling of adrenalin rushing up and down the chest'. These are symptoms related to Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel along its course in the abdomen and chest and affecting the Heart and the region under the xyphoid process.

In the absence of other Penetrating Vessel symptoms along its course, symptoms in the area under the xyphoid are usually related to the Stomach or Heart. The symptoms in this area should be closely integrated with palpation: a hardness on palpation indicates a Full condition and a softness indicates an Empty condition.

A feeling of oppression in the area under the xyphoid process usually indicates Phlegm or severe stagnation of Qi in the Heart and Stomach channel. A feeling of fullness in this area indicates retention of food in the Stomach affecting the Heart; a feeling of stuffiness in this area (i.e. the patient feels full but the area is soft on palpation) indicates Stomach and Spleen deficiency with Heart-Heat. A feeling of distension in this area indicates stagnation of Qi in the Stomach.

On the pulse, this area can be felt on the distal end of the right-Middle position by placing the finger on the Stomach position and rolling it distally very slightly.

AREA UNDER THE XYPHOID PROCESS

- Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel: tightness and distension with anxiety and palpitations
- Phlegm or severe Qi stagnation: feeling of oppression
- Retention of food: feeling of fullness
- Stomach and Spleen deficiency with Heart-Heat: feeling of stuffiness
- Stomach-Qi stagnation: feeling of distension

ii) Epigastrium

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

This refers to the area between the xyphoid process and the umbilicus, excluding the hypochondrial area. The epigastrium is closely related to the Stomach and Spleen channels, and reflects primarily Stomach patterns, such as Cold in the Stomach, Stomach-Heat, Stomach-Fire, Damp-Heat in the Stomach, Stomach Deficient and Cold, Stomach-Yin deficiency, etc.

In a patient presenting with an epigastric problem (which is usually pain or distension) it is important to

integrate questions about the character of the epigastric pain with those about thirst, taste, nausea, belching and sour regurgitation.

The upper part of the epigastrium, the area just below the xyphoid process, is also influenced by the Heart channel, and in Chinese medicine there is often an overlap and an interaction between the Stomach and the Heart channels in certain patterns. For example, rebellious Stomach-Qi causing nausea and vomiting is often associated with rebellious Heart-Qi – that is, Heart-Qi not descending so that the patient may have epigastric pain, nausea, vomiting, belching, sour regurgitation but also palpitations and a discomfort that extends from the epigastrium to the sternum area.

However, epigastric pain is not always related to the Stomach channel and in some cases the Chinese diagnosis of epigastric pain should be integrated with a Western diagnosis. For example, when the Large Intestine is affected by stagnation of Qi and there is severe flatulence in the transverse colon, this may cause epigastric pain; in this case it would be wrong to attribute the problem to the Stomach channel simply because it occurs in the epigastric area. Of course, in such a case there would be other symptoms such as lower abdominal pain, constipation and small stools, which would point to the Large Intestine.

There are many types of epigastric pain, as follows:

- A spastic epigastric pain that is ameliorated by the application of heat and ingestion of warm drinks indicates Full Cold in the Stomach.
- Epigastric pain with a pronounced feeling of fullness indicates retention of food, which is more common in children.
- A distending epigastric pain radiating to the right or left hypochondrium indicates rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach; this is a very common type of epigastric pain.
- Burning epigastric pain denotes Stomach-Heat.
- Burning epigastric pain with a feeling of heaviness, nausea and a feeling of oppression of the chest indicates Phlegm-Heat in the Stomach.
- Burning epigastric pain with a feeling of heaviness, a sticky taste and a sticky-yellow tongue coating denotes Damp-Heat in the Stomach.
- A severe, stabbing epigastric pain indicates Blood stasis in the Stomach.
- A chronic, intermittent, dull ache that is ameliorated by the application of heat and ingestion of warm

drinks and is aggravated by overwork indicates Stomach Deficient and Cold.

- A chronic, intermittent, dull, slightly burning epigastric pain with a dry mouth indicates Stomach-Yin deficiency.

Feelings of pain, distension, tightness or oppression of the epigastrium also may be caused by rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel. However, such epigastric sensations point to a Penetrating Vessel pathology only when they are associated with other abdominal symptoms such as pain or distension in the lower abdomen or umbilical pain.

Interrogation about epigastric symptoms should be closely integrated with investigation of the tongue and pulse.

Epigastrium manifestation on the tongue

On the tongue, the epigastric area is reflected either in the centre or on the sides around the centre (Fig. 23.3). An examination of the coating in this area is essential to distinguish Full from Empty conditions as a Full condition will be reflected by a thick coating in this area and an Empty condition by a rootless coating or the absence of coating. The coating in this area also closely reflects the Hot or Cold nature of Stomach problems: a white coating indicates Cold and a yellow (including brown) coating indicates Heat. The thickness of the coating reflects the intensity of the pathogenic factor: the thicker the coating, the more intense the pathogenic factor.

To summarize, when examining the coating in the Stomach area of the tongue, we should establish systematically first whether there is a coating, second the colour of the coating and third the thickness of the coating. Some Stomach pathologies are reflected in the central section of the tongue on the sides; for example, Stomach-Heat often manifests with a redness in these areas. Cracks in the central area are a very clear reflection of Stomach-Yin deficiency; these may be small horizontal or vertical cracks or a wide, mid-line crack in the central area. While small cracks in this area develop gradually from dietary irregularities, a wide central mid-line Stomach crack may be hereditary and indicate a tendency to develop Stomach-Yin deficiency.

Epigastrium manifestation on the pulse

With regard to the pulse, the right-middle position of course reflects closely Stomach disharmonies. The most

common pulse qualities in this position are Slippery, Soggy, Floating-Empty and Wiry. A Slippery pulse in the Stomach/Spleen position indicates retention of Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen; a Soggy quality indicates Dampness occurring against a background of Stomach and Spleen deficiency; a Floating-Empty pulse in this position indicates Stomach-Yin deficiency; a Wiry pulse in this position denotes Stomach-Qi stagnation which may occur by itself or as a consequence of Liver-Qi stagnation, in which case the pulse would be Wiry in both Middle positions. An interesting aspect of the Stomach pulse is its upper part, which is felt by rolling the finger distally (towards the fingers) very slightly; this corresponds to the oesophagus, and, if the pulse is Tight in this area, it indicates rebellious Stomach-Qi or stagnation of food in the upper part of the Stomach, often due to eating too fast or eating when under pressure at work.



TREATMENT

Essential points for epigastric pain/distension: Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli.



Remember:

- Ren-13 Shangwan subdues rebellious Stomach-Qi.
- Ren-12 Zhongwan tonifies Stomach-Qi (but it also resolves Dampness and Phlegm).
- Ren-10 Xiawan stimulates the descending of Stomach-Qi in Empty conditions.

EPIGASTRIC PAIN

- Blood stasis in the Stomach: stabbing pain
- Cold in the Stomach: spastic pain ameliorated by heat
- Retention of food: pain with feeling of fullness
- Rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach: distending pain radiating to the right or left
- Stomach-Heat: burning pain
- Phlegm-Heat in the Stomach: burning pain with feeling of heaviness and nausea
- Damp-Heat in the Stomach: pain with feeling of heaviness and sticky taste
- Stomach Deficient and Cold: chronic, intermittent, dull ache ameliorated by heat
- Stomach-Yin deficiency: chronic, intermittent burning pain, dry mouth
- Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel distension: tightness and pain radiating to abdomen and/or chest with anxiety

iii) Hypochondrium

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

Most patients are not familiar with the word 'hypochondrium'. Therefore when I ask patients about symptoms in this area, I simply point to it. The hypochondrial area includes the ribs and the area immediately below them on both sides; this area is influenced by the Liver and Gall-Bladder channels, and it is important to note that the left hypochondrial area also may reflect Liver disharmonies. Again, when patients report abdominal problems in this area, it is important to identify the location exactly. If any pain is located only in the hypochondrial region, it is definitely related to the Liver and/or Gall-Bladder channels; if the pain starts in the hypochondrial region and radiates towards the centre of the epigastrium, it indicates rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach; if the pain starts in the centre of the epigastrium and radiates towards either the right or left hypochondrium, it indicates a primary deficiency of the Stomach with a secondary stagnation of Liver-Qi.

Case History

A 49-year-old woman had been suffering from recurrent bouts of pain and discomfort in the right hypochondrium for the past 7 years. The pain was sometimes sharp in nature and radiated to her shoulder.

The patient also suffered from a feeling of muzziness in her head, lacked concentration and sometimes had difficulty finding her words. She had occasional dizzy spells in the mornings and also suffered from blurred vision and floaters. She often felt tired and her joints would ache, especially her left hip, where she had pain for a long time.

The patient suffered from insomnia and often woke up between 3 and 4 am. She used to suffer from colitis, with abdominal pain, mucus and blood in the stools and diarrhoea. This had been helped by acupuncture, although she still had loose stools.

She suffered from premenstrual breast distension and irritability. Her periods were becoming scantier, and her left breast hurt after her period. She had several breast lumps.

The tongue body was slightly Pale-Purple, with red points and slightly Red sides. It was Swollen with teethmarks and had a sticky coating. Her pulse was Deep-Weak-Choppy, and the left-Front position was relatively Overflowing.

Diagnosis

The hypochondrial pain is caused by Liver-Qi stagnation. Other symptoms of Liver-Qi stagnation are the premenstrual breast distension and irritability. Evidence of the long-standing and severe nature of the stagnation is shown by the tongue having a slightly Purple colour.

The feeling of muzziness in the head, lack of concentration, difficulty finding words, breast lumps and dizzy spells in the morning point towards the presence of Phlegm. This is confirmed by the Swollen tongue body and the sticky tongue coating.

The underlying deficiency which led to the development of Phlegm is predominantly one of Spleen- and Kidney-Yang. This is causing the loose stools and tiredness and is reflected in the pulse, which is Deep and Weak, and on the tongue, which is Swollen with teethmarks.

There is also a deficiency of Liver-Blood, manifesting with blurred vision, floaters, the periods becoming scantier, the Choppy quality of the pulse and the Pale colour of the tongue. The pain in the left breast occurring *after* the period indicates that, although it is due to Liver-Qi stagnation, there is an underlying Blood deficiency. Ache in the joints is normally due to Painful Obstruction Syndrome with Wind, Dampness or Cold; however, in women, ache in the joints without swelling is often caused simply by deficient Blood failing to nourish the sinews as is the case in this patient.

iv) Umbilical area

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

The umbilical area is influenced by the Kidney and Liver channels and the Directing and Penetrating Vessel. Pain in this area is more common in children than in adults.

The most common patterns causing umbilical pain are:

- Cold in the abdomen
- Qi stagnation
- Blood stasis
- Retention of food (more common in children).

v) Central-lower abdominal area

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

The central-lower abdominal area is influenced by many different channels: Kidney, Liver, Bladder, Small Intestine,

Directing Vessel, Penetrating Vessel and the Uterus itself. Pain in this area is often difficult to diagnose due to the involvement of so many different channels: the difficulties are compounded in women because of the influence of the Uterus on this area.

The most common patterns causing problems in this area are:

- Stagnation of Qi: pronounced feeling of distension or distending pain
- Stasis of Blood: fixed, severe and stabbing pain
- Dampness: feeling of heaviness.

Apart from identifying the pattern, it is of course necessary to identify the channel involved and this is done according to the accompanying symptoms. In the case of the Bladder, there will be some urinary symptoms; in the case of the Uterus, there will be some menstrual irregularities; in the case of the Small Intestine, there will be borborygmi, loose stools or constipation; and in the case of the Liver, there will be a pronounced distension and a clear correlation of the abdominal problem with the emotional state.

CENTRAL-LOWER ABDOMINAL PAIN

- Bladder Damp-Heat: pain with frequent and difficult urination
- Blood stasis or Damp-Heat in the Uterus: pain during the periods
- Damp-Heat in the Small Intestine: pain with borborygmi and loose stools or constipation
- Liver-Qi stagnation: distending pain aggravated by emotional stress periods?

Case History

A 31-year-old woman complained of abdominal pain following a dilatation and curettage operation on her uterus. Ten months previously she had an exploratory laparoscopy for a suspected ovarian cyst; she developed complications after this operation, with an infection of the scar and a haematoma in the abdomen. Three months after that she had a termination of pregnancy. She developed complications and was advised to have a dilatation and curettage of her womb. Following these procedures she developed a constant, sharp, lower abdominal pain, pain on intercourse and mid-cycle bleeding; her menstrual blood became dark with clots. Before all this happened, her periods were painful but not dark and without any mid-cycle bleeding.

Apart from the above problem, she also complained of a pronounced tiredness and, on interrogation, it transpired that she suffered from floaters in the afternoon, tingling of her limbs, poor memory and dizziness. She also complained of lower backache which she attributed to riding and the occasional tinnitus. She felt cold in general and suffered from cold hands and feet. She occasionally also suffered from a slight pain in the chest with a feeling of palpitations and breathlessness for which she used an inhaler.

Her complexion was rather pale and the *shen* of her eyes was bright. Her voice sounded clear but with a very subtle tone of sadness to it. Her tongue was Pale in general with paler sides, Swollen, with a Stomach crack and a rootless coating on the root. Her pulse was Weak and Choppy and particularly Weak on both Rear positions; the Heart position was also particularly Choppy.

Diagnosis

In diagnosis, we must differentiate the diagnosis of her present, acute problem (abdominal pain, dyspareunia and mid-cycle bleeding following the dilatation and curettage) from that of her underlying condition. The present problem of abdominal pain is clearly due to Blood stasis, which is clearly shown by the sharpness of the pain and the darkness of the menstrual blood with clots. The tongue does not show any Blood stasis (as it is not Purple) due to the relative short duration of this problem.

The underlying condition is characterized primarily by three problems:

1. Blood deficiency (Pale tongue, floaters, tiredness, tingling, poor memory and dizziness). There is Blood deficiency of the Liver but also of the Heart, as evidenced by the palpitations, breathlessness and the Choppy pulse on the Heart position.
2. Stomach and Spleen deficiency with some affliction of the Intestines. The Spleen deficiency is manifested clearly by the swelling of the sides of the tongue and the tiredness. The Stomach deficiency is manifested by the Stomach crack and the rootless coating. The fact that the rootless coating is on the root of the tongue shows there is an intestinal pathology. It was only after I pointed this out to her that she said that she had also just been diagnosed as suffering from intestinal parasites.
3. Kidney-Yang deficiency (lower backache, feeling cold, cold feet and hands, occasional tinnitus).

As for possible aetiology, I ventured to say that in my opinion the main origin of the problem was emotional. I based this primarily on the choppiness of the pulse (especially on the Heart pulse) and its lack of wave, which is usually due to sadness. As I told her that I thought sadness was the main origin of the problem, she confirmed this by saying that she had been repeatedly sexually abused as a child. I think this was the emotional cause for the Blood deficiency (especially of the Heart) and also of the Kidney deficiency as the sexual abuse was obviously accompanied by fear which injured the Kidneys. Besides being sexually abused she was also frequently beaten across the lower back. I think that that, rather than riding, was the cause for the lower backache.

Treatment

In treatment, one must concentrate on the present, acute problem of Blood stasis in the abdomen with a formula to invigorate Blood and eliminate stasis such as Sheng Hua Tang *Generating and Transforming Decoction*, which is a formula for abdominal pain from Blood stasis after childbirth. The termination and dilatation and curettage are somewhat energetically equivalent to childbirth (without, of course, the pronounced depletion of Qi and Blood that follows childbirth).

vi) Right-lateral lower abdominal area

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

This area is influenced primarily by the Large Intestine and Liver channels and by the Penetrating Vessel. As a rule of thumb, problems in this area are caused by the gynaecological system more often than the Large Intestine. For example, in women, pain in this area is very often due to ovarian cysts.

The most common patterns causing pain in this area are:

- stagnation of Qi: distension and/or distending pain
- stasis of Blood: fixed, severe, stabbing pain with a feeling of mass

- Dampness: accompanied by a feeling of heaviness
- Cold: severe, spastic pain that is alleviated by the application of heat.

vii) Left-Lateral Lower Abdominal Area

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#)

This area is influenced by the Large Intestine, Liver and Spleen channels and by the Penetrating Vessel. As a rule of thumb, compared to the right-lower abdominal region, problems in this area are often caused by the pathology of the Large Intestine. The most common patterns causing problems in this area are the same as those of the right-lateral lower abdominal area:

- stagnation of Qi: distension and/or distending pain
- stasis of Blood: fixed, severe, stabbing pain with a feeling of mass
- Dampness: accompanied by a feeling of heaviness
- Cold: severe, spastic pain that is alleviated by the application of heat.

[Figure 38.3](#) summarizes the most common patterns affecting each area of the chest and abdomen.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- That the front of the chest is influenced by the Heart and Lungs and is where the Gathering Qi (*Zong Qi*) gathers; that the sides of the chest are influenced by the Liver and Gall-Bladder.
- Why, when and how we ask about the chest.
- The clinical significance of cough, chest pain, pain in the ribs, feeling of oppression or heat in the chest and palpitations.
- Why, when and how we ask about the abdomen.
- The four most common abdominal sensations due to Full or Empty and Hot or Cold patterns: distension, pain, fullness and stuffiness.
- The areas of abdominal pain: the area under the xyphoid process (*Xin Xia*), epigastrium, hypochondrium, umbilical area, central-lower abdominal area, right-lateral and left lateral abdominal areas.

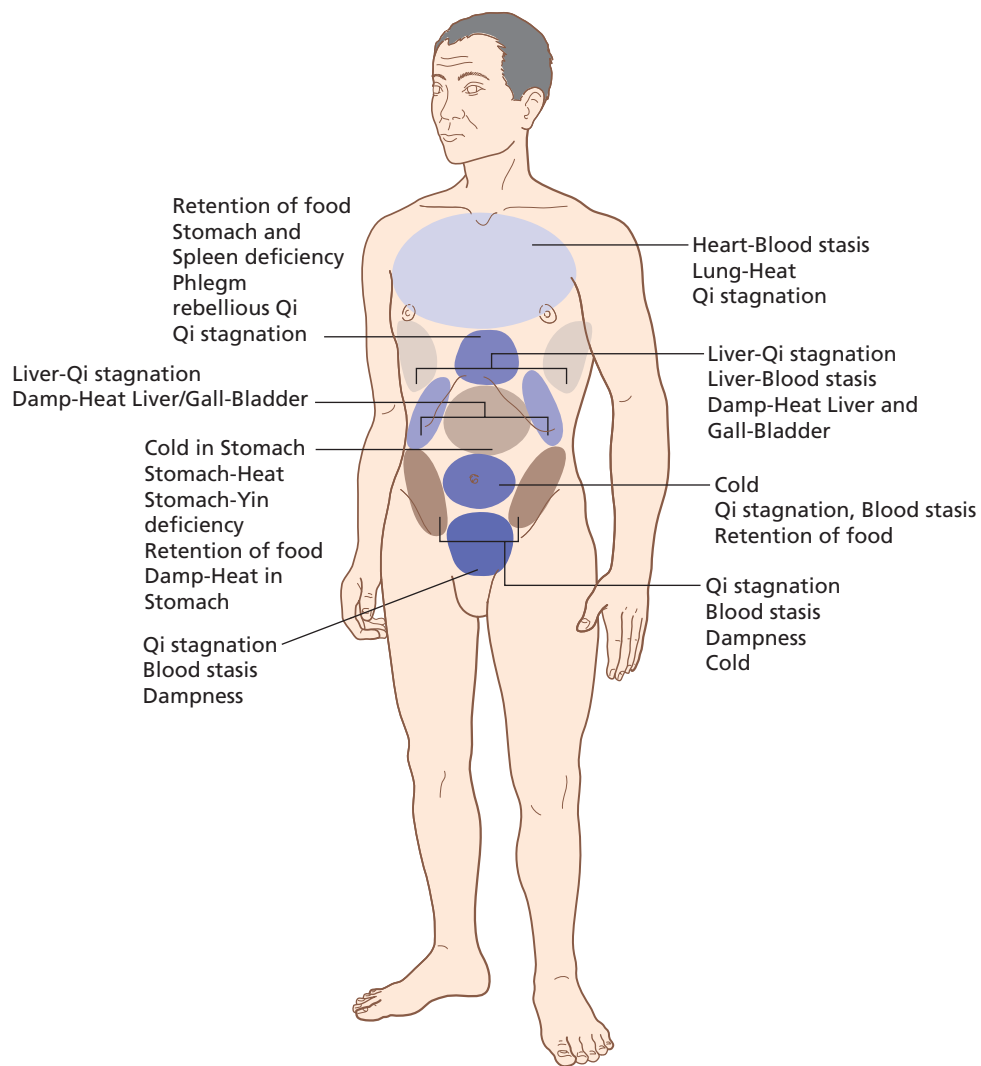


Figure 38.3. Main patterns in chest and abdomen by area.

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Limbs

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Burning sensation in the soles
Feeling of heaviness of the limbs
Cramps in the calves
Muscle ache in the limbs

This chapter deals with symptoms that may occur in the arms, the legs or all four limbs. Apart from the obvious influence of each channel on the limb it traverses, the four limbs are influenced primarily by the Spleen and Stomach in general.

WHY we ask

Generally speaking, questions about the four limbs are asked only when the patient presents with a problem specific to them. The main exceptions to this are when a patient presents with symptoms of Blood deficiency, in which case I always ask about numbness of the limbs, or when a patient has symptoms of Dampness, in which case I ask about any feeling of heaviness in the limbs.

WHEN we ask

I generally ask about problems in the limbs when the patient presents with a specific problem such as oedema, numbness or weakness of the limbs.

I also ask about the limbs in three other situations. When I suspect a Stomach-Qi deficiency, I ask about weakness of the limbs; when I suspect a Kidney deficiency, I ask about weakness of knees; and when I suspect Phlegm or Blood deficiency, I ask about numbness or tingling of the limbs.

HOW we ask

When we ask about the limbs, we should make it clear that we mean all four limbs, that is, whether the patient has a problem such as weakness, heaviness or numbness of all limbs.

The symptoms discussed are:

1. Weakness of the limbs
2. Difficulty in walking (atrophy/flaccidity of limbs)
3. Feeling of distension of the limbs
4. Numbness/tingling of the limbs
5. Generalized joint pain
6. Tremor of limbs
7. Pain and inability to raise the shoulder
8. Pain in the elbow
9. Pain in the hands
10. Cold hands
11. Hot hands
12. Itchy hands

13. Numbness/tingling of the hands
14. Oedema of the hands
15. Pain in the hip
16. Pain in the thigh
17. Pain in the knees
18. Weak knees
19. Cold feet
20. Pain in the feet
21. Oedema of the feet
22. Pain in the soles
23. Burning sensation in the soles
24. Feeling of heaviness of the limbs
25. Cramps in the calves
26. Muscle ache in the limbs

1. WEAKNESS OF THE LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64](#) and [66](#)

The three most common causes of weakness of the limbs are Stomach-Qi deficiency, a general Qi and Blood deficiency and a deficiency of Kidney-Yang. The Stomach carries the food essences to the four limbs, and for this reason a weakness of Stomach-Qi is the most common cause of a feeling of weakness of the limbs. The Kidneys carry food essences and Blood to the legs, and a weakness of the limbs in the elderly is more likely to be due to a Kidney deficiency.



TREATMENT

Weakness of the four limbs: L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli.

2. DIFFICULTY IN WALKING (ATROPHY/FLACCIDITY OF LIMBS)

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

Atrophy or flaccidity of the limbs causes difficulty in walking; the most common example of this in Western patients is multiple sclerosis.

In the beginning stages, atrophy/flaccidity of the limbs is often due to a Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency, failing to carry food essences to the limbs. In later stages, atrophy and/or flaccidity of the limbs is often due to a deficiency of Yin of the Liver and Kidneys or a deficiency of Yang of the Spleen and Kidneys.

Atrophy/flaccidity of the limbs in children is due to deficiency of Kidney-Essence. A general deficiency of Qi and Blood also may cause atrophy/flaccidity of the limbs.



TREATMENT

Difficulty in walking: ST-31 Biguan, ST-36 Zusanli.

3. FEELING OF DISTENSION OF THE LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

The five most common causes of a feeling of distension of the limbs are:

- Qi stagnation
- Qi stagnation with Dampness
- Blood stasis from Qi deficiency
- Wind-Phlegm
- Dampness in the muscles.

Qi stagnation causes a feeling of distension of the limbs and particularly in the hands and feet.

If the feeling of distension of the limbs is accompanied by a swelling under the skin and a sallow complexion, it is due to Qi stagnation with Dampness. It should be noted that this swelling is not real oedema and finger pressure does not leave a dip in the skin. This type of distension and swelling of the limbs is very common in women suffering from premenstrual syndrome.

If the feeling of distension of the limbs is aggravated by over-exertion and the lower legs have a purple colour, it is due to Blood stasis deriving from Qi deficiency.

If the feeling of distension of the limbs is accompanied by numbness, tingling, a feeling of heaviness and tremor, it is due to Wind-Phlegm.

A feeling of distension of the limbs also may be due to retention of Dampness in the muscles which may be associated with Cold or Heat; in this case, there would also be a feeling of heaviness of the limbs.

FEELING OF DISTENSION OF THE LIMBS

- Qi stagnation
- Qi stagnation with Dampness: distension feeling and swelling
- Blood stasis from Qi deficiency: distension feeling, weakness, purple colour
- Wind-Phlegm: distension feeling, numbness, tingling
- Dampness: feeling of distension and heaviness



TREATMENT

- Tremor of limbs: G.B.-31 Fengshi, T.B.-6 Zhigou, LIV-3 Taichong.
- The tongue indicating Liver-Wind may be Moving, Deviated or Stiff.

4. NUMBNESS/TINGLING OF THE LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

‘Numbness’ here includes tingling in the limbs. Generally speaking, a feeling of numbness/tingling may be due to:

- Blood deficiency
- Wind
- Phlegm
- Dampness or Damp-Heat
- Stagnation of Qi and Blood.

Blood deficiency usually causes tingling, whereas Phlegm and Wind tend to cause more numbness; with Wind, the numbness is often unilateral. However, these are only general rules.

Blood deficiency is a common cause of numbness/tingling of the limbs in younger people, especially women. In the elderly, a numbness of the limbs is very often caused by Wind or Wind-Phlegm obstructing the channels and, in the case of Wind, the numbness is often unilateral. Dampness or Damp-Heat may cause numbness of the limbs and especially of the legs. In a few cases, numbness may be caused by stagnation of Qi and Blood in the limbs, in which case it is relieved by exercise.

NUMBNESS/TINGLING OF THE LIMBS

- Blood deficiency: common in women, more tingling
- Wind: more numbness, often unilateral, common in the elderly
- Phlegm: with feeling of heaviness
- Dampness: with swelling
- Stagnation of Qi and Blood: with pain

Case History

A 63-year-old man had been suffering from multiple sclerosis for 10 years, although the disease had been diagnosed only 3 years previously. For a long time the only symptom he had suffered from was a tingling

sensation in the right arm and leg; more recently, he started to drag the right leg and experienced difficulty with the right arm. In addition, he had recently developed a dry throat and cough and suffered from occasional night-sweating and tinnitus. His latest symptom was spasms.

His pulse was Fine on the right and Wiry on the left. His tongue was slightly Reddish-Purple and dry with small cracks, and the tongue coating was slightly too thin.

Diagnosis

The initial symptom of tingling of the right leg indicates Dampness, which is usually the first stage of multiple sclerosis. The more recent dragging of the right leg and difficulty with the right arm indicate that the disease has progressed to a further stage: Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency. The patient later developed a dry throat and cough, night-sweating and tinnitus, which indicate that the disease has progressed to yet a further stage of Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency. This is confirmed by the pulse being Fine on the right; the tongue, which was dry; and the tongue coating, which was slightly too thin. Finally, the spasms in the leg indicate internal Wind, which derives from Yin deficiency and is usually the last stage of multiple sclerosis. Therefore, this case history shows succinctly all the four stages of multiple sclerosis – that is, Dampness, Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency, Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency and internal Wind.

5. GENERALIZED JOINT PAIN

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

Pain in multiple joints is generally due to Wind (Wind Painful Obstruction Syndrome) combined with Dampness and/or Cold. If the site of the pain moves, affecting different joints every day, it strongly indicates Wind. A severe pain indicates Cold, and swelling of the joints indicates Dampness. In chronic conditions, Dampness frequently combines with Heat and causes swelling, redness and heat of the joints.

Case History

A 50-year-old woman had been suffering from osteoarthritis for the past year. There had been a sudden onset of the condition after the patient had suffered a severe shock. The pain, which was stabbing in nature,

had first affected the elbow, shoulder and neck; however, it spread to all the other joints after the patient was put in neck traction. The joints were not swollen. The patient said she felt like she 'was being crushed inside'. The pain was alleviated by taking a hot bath and made worse by damp or cold weather and stress.

She had four children. During her first pregnancy, she suffered from repeated kidney infections; during her third pregnancy, she developed asthma; and during her fourth pregnancy, she developed a pre-eclampsia condition with high blood pressure. Her blood pressure had remained high ever since, and she was on medication for this.

The patient had a tendency towards constipation and said that she had no energy. She started taking hormone replacement therapy (HRT) 5 years previously after suffering from hot flushes, lethargy and mood swings. She had continued to suffer from recurrent kidney infections since her first pregnancy.

The tongue body was Reddish-Purple, Swollen and had cracks in the Stomach and Spleen area. The tongue coating was very thin. The pulse was Slippery in general and Weak in both Rear positions.

Diagnosis

The widespread and moving joint pain which is aggravated by exposure to damp and cold weather indicates Painful Obstruction Syndrome from Wind and Cold. Wind is indicated by the moving pain, and Cold is indicated by the intensity of the pain and its aggravation from exposure to cold. The absence of swelling of the joints indicates that there is no pronounced Dampness.

The stabbing joint pain is caused by Blood stasis in the channels which was brought on by the sudden shock the patient experienced just prior to the onset of the symptoms. Being put in neck traction, with the consequent restriction of movement, would have only exacerbated the Blood stasis. Blood stasis is obvious from the Purple colour of the tongue body and the stabbing nature of the joint pain. The hypertension is caused by Kidney deficiency and retention of Phlegm, which itself has come about as a result of the long-standing Kidney deficiency and is evidenced by the Swollen tongue and Slippery pulse.

There is an underlying Kidney deficiency, which is predominantly a deficiency of Kidney-Yin. This probably originated during her first pregnancy at the age of 16, when she suffered from kidney problems, and was exacerbated by her third pregnancy, which was when

she developed asthma, and further aggravated during the fourth pregnancy, when she developed a pre-eclampsia condition. Other signs and symptoms of Kidney-Yin deficiency are the hot flushes the patient suffered before going on HRT, the tendency towards constipation and the lack of tongue coating.

I interpreted the expression she used '*feeling like being crushed inside*' as strongly suggestive of the emotional origin (shock) of her problem.

6. TREMOR OF LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 4 and 18](#)

A tremor of the limbs always indicates Liver-Wind; we should then establish the source of Liver-Wind and whether it is Full or Empty Wind. The root cause of Liver-Wind may be Heat during an acute febrile disease, Liver-Fire, Liver-Yang rising, a deficiency of Yin of the Liver and/or Kidneys and Liver-Blood deficiency. The last two types of Wind are of the Empty type, and all the others are of the Full type.

Full Wind is characterized by pronounced tremors or convulsions (during an acute febrile disease), whereas Empty Wind is characterized by fine tremors or tics.

LIVER-WIND

- Full type: pronounced tremors, convulsions, vertigo, unilateral numbness of a limb, Wiry pulse.
- Empty type: fine tremors, tics, mild dizziness, tingling of limbs, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Case History

A 46-year-old man had been suffering from a fine tremor of his right arm for 3 years. He had seen a neurologist who excluded the diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. This patient had very few other symptoms, complaining only of a feeling of heat in the head, cold hands and feet, floaters, an occasional itch in the left eye and occasional heat and dryness in both eyes. His skin was also rather dry, and he had been suffering from myopia from the age of 8.

His body type was a mixture of Metal and Wood. His tongue was slightly Thin, was Red on the sides and did not have sufficient coating in the centre. His pulse was slightly Wiry on the left and Weak on the right, mostly on the Lung position.

Diagnosis

The tremor of the arm is an unmistakable sign of Liver-Wind, and we should establish the root pattern giving rise to Wind. In this case, it is Liver-Blood and Liver-Yin deficiency. The symptoms of Liver-Blood deficiency are floaters, itch of the left eye, dry skin, myopia from childhood, and Weak pulse on the right. Dryness of the eyes and the lack of coating on the tongue indicate Liver-Yin deficiency. There are also some symptoms of Liver-Yang rising (feeling of heat in the head and eyes, Red sides of the tongue) and of Liver-Qi stagnation (cold hands and feet). The Wiry pulse may be related to any of the Full Liver patterns. In Liver disharmonies, it is not unusual to have a combination of several different patterns.

There are no symptoms or signs corresponding to the weakness of the Lung pulse, which is not unusual for this organ. When the Lung pulse is the weakest of all the pulse positions, I usually relate this to emotional problems due to sadness and grief.

Case History

A 45-year-old woman had been suffering from a fine tremor of the left arm for 1 year. She also experienced numbness and tingling of the left arm. She had very few other symptoms, except for her periods being quite scanty.

Her tongue was Pale and slightly Thin, and her pulse was Fine and Wiry.

Diagnosis

This is a clear example of Empty Wind deriving from Blood deficiency. The Blood deficiency is evident from the Pale and Thin tongue and Fine pulse, and the Wind is evident from the Wiry pulse and obviously the tremor of the arm.

7. PAIN AND INABILITY TO RAISE THE ARM

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Inability to raise the arm, nearly always accompanied by pain in the shoulder, is a very common complaint, especially after the age of 40.

The most common cause of inability to raise the arm is chronic retention of Cold in the joint due to successive exposures to cold and damp weather; this syndrome

falls under the category of Painful Obstruction Syndrome. In this case the pain is worse with rest and better with exercise, aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by exposure to heat and wearing warm clothes.

Another common cause of this problem is sprain of the shoulder joint, which leads to local stagnation of Qi and Blood; in this case the pain is better with gentle exercise and worse with rest.

In old people, chronic inability to raise the arm is often due to local Blood stasis, which may be a consequence of chronic retention of Cold or repetitive strain. In this case, the inability to raise the arm is very pronounced and there is severe pain and stiffness that are worse at night.

In rare cases, inability to raise the arm accompanies Chest Painful Obstruction Syndrome, in which case the patient suffers from chest pain, breathlessness and palpitations.

PAIN AND INABILITY TO RAISE THE ARM

- Cold in the joint: Painful Obstruction Syndrome
- Stagnation of Qi and Blood
- Local Blood stasis
- General Blood stasis: Chest Painful Obstruction Syndrome (Chest *Bi*)

8. PAIN IN THE ELBOW

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Pain in the elbow is usually due to either retention of Cold or local stagnation of Qi and Blood as a result of repetitive strain injury. In the case of retention of Cold, the pain is severe and aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by the application of heat. In the case of stagnation of Qi and Blood, the pain is aggravated by rest and slightly ameliorated by movement.

9. PAIN IN THE HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

Pain in the hands may be of a Full or Empty nature; in Full conditions the pain is severe and in Empty conditions it is dull.

The three most common causes are retention of Cold, Dampness or Wind (or a combination of these) in the hands; this falls under the category of Painful

Obstruction Syndrome. When the hand pain is due to Cold, it is intense, aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by application of heat; when it is due to Dampness, there is swelling of the fingers; when due to Wind, the pain in the hands is usually associated with pain in other joints.

Pain in the hands also may be due to Liver-Qi stagnation, in which case it may be accompanied by pain in the feet. In chronic cases, Qi stagnation will lead to Blood stasis and this may cause a severe pain in the fingers which is worse at night and a pronounced stiffness in them.

Blood deficiency may cause a dull ache in the hands. This is due to deficient Blood not reaching the hands and causing a minor local stagnation; it is more common in women. Yang deficiency also may cause a dull ache in the hands, similar to Blood deficiency, and, in addition, the hands have a pronounced cold feeling.

PAIN IN THE HANDS

- Severe hand pain aggravated by cold: Cold Painful Obstruction Syndrome
- Hand pain with swelling: Damp Painful Obstruction Syndrome
- Pain in the hands and other joints: Wind Painful Obstruction Syndrome
- Hand pain with swelling and heat: Damp-Heat in the joints
- Pain in the hands and feet: Liver-Qi stagnation
- Severe pain in the hands and fingers that is worse at night and with stiffness: Blood stasis
- Dull ache in the hands: Blood deficiency
- Dull ache in the hands ameliorated by heat, cold hands: Yang deficiency

10. COLD HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64 and 65](#)

Cold hands are due to three possible causes: Yang deficiency (the most common one), Blood deficiency, and Qi stagnation.

Yang deficiency causing cold hands is most commonly of the Spleen, Lungs or Heart. Blood deficiency, especially of the Heart, also may cause cold hands; it is more frequent in women. Liver-Qi stagnation may cause cold hands but in conjunction with cold feet. This is called the Four Rebellious Syndrome, in which the 'four rebellious' indicates cold hands and feet; the famous formula *Si Ni San* *Four Rebellious Powder* is used for this pattern. An important difference between cold

limbs due to Yang deficiency and cold limbs due to Qi stagnation is that in the former case the whole limb will be cold whereas in the latter case, only the hands and feet are cold.

In the case of deficiency of Yang or Blood, the cold feeling is due to deficient Yang-Qi or Blood not reaching the extremities; in the case of Liver-Qi stagnation, Qi does not reach the extremities because it stagnates in the body.

COLD HANDS

- Cold hands ameliorated by heat: Yang deficiency
- Cold hands with palpitations and dizziness: Heart-Blood deficiency
- Cold fingers and toes: Liver-Qi stagnation

11. HOT HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64 and 65](#)

To diagnose the significance of hot hands, we must first of all differentiate between Exterior and Interior syndromes. In exterior syndromes due to invasion of Wind, the dorsum of the hands feels hot to the touch while the patient feels cold in general. The simultaneous subjective cold feeling of the patient (to the point of shivering) and the objective feeling of heat in the dorsum of the hands characterizes the initial stages of an invasion of Wind.

In interior conditions, hot hands are due to either Full or Empty Heat usually of the Lungs, Heart or Stomach. In Interior conditions, it will be the palms rather than the dorsum that are especially hot. In Full Heat the whole hand feels hot, whereas in Empty Heat especially the palms feel hot.

HOT HANDS

- Hot dorsum of the hands with acute onset and aversion to cold: invasion of external Wind
- Chronic hot dorsum of the hands: Full Heat (Lungs, Heart or Stomach)
- Chronic hot palms: Empty-Heat (Lungs or Heart)

12. ITCHY HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64 and 65](#)

A common cause of itchiness of the hands is Dampness, which may be associated with Heat. With Dampness,

the itchiness of the hands is associated with swelling of the fingers and often small, white vesicles; with Damp-Heat the itching is more intense and is associated with swelling and redness of the fingers.

Another possible cause of itchiness of the hands is Blood deficiency leading to Wind in the skin.

13. NUMBNESS/TINGLING OF THE HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 65](#)

When asking patients about numbness, it is important to explain to them that this includes any feeling of tingling (in Britain often called 'pins and needles').

Causes of numbness or tingling of the hands include:

- Blood deficiency
- Phlegm
- Qi and Blood stagnation
- Wind.

Blood deficiency is a common cause of numbness/tingling of the hands, especially tingling. Phlegm may cause numbness/tingling of the hands and especially numbness. Another, less common cause of numbness/tingling of the hands is chronic Qi and Blood stagnation. Unilateral numbness or tingling of the first three fingers in an old person may indicate the possibility of impending Wind-stroke.

14. OEDEMA OF THE HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64 and 65](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

Oedema of the hands may be due to Lung-Yang deficiency or Spleen-Yang deficiency; in this case the oedema is pitting. If the oedema is not pitting, it is due to Qi stagnation.

15. PAIN IN THE HIP

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The most common cause of hip pain is invasion of Cold and Dampness in the hip joint, in which case the pain is unilateral, severe and with marked rigidity of the joint.

In the elderly, hip pain is often due to chronic stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood affecting the Gall-Bladder channel.

16. PAIN IN THE THIGH

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

Pain in the thigh may be due to retention of Dampness in the muscles which may be associated with Heat or Cold; in this case, the pain radiates to the groin.

Chronic thigh pain may be due to Qi deficiency with Blood stasis or to Kidney-Yang deficiency.

17. PAIN IN THE KNEES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The most common cause of pain in the knees is invasion of Cold, which falls under the category of Painful Obstruction Syndrome. Invasion of Cold in the knee causes severe pain, usually unilateral, and rigidity. Cold is often associated with Dampness, in which case the knee is also swollen. When Dampness is retained for a long time, it may transform into Damp-Heat, in which case, the knee is painful, swollen and hot.

Another common cause of pain in the knee is sprain due to working conditions, which usually causes local stagnation of Qi and Blood.

Dull knee ache which improves with rest, has a gradual onset and is associated with weakness of the knees is due to Kidney deficiency.

PAIN IN THE KNEES

- Invasion of Cold: severe pain
- Damp-Cold: pain and swelling
- Damp-Heat: pain, swelling and hot to the touch
- Stagnation of Qi and Blood: better with exercise
- Kidney deficiency: chronic, better with rest

18. WEAK KNEES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The most common cause of weak knees is a deficiency of the Kidneys. A chronic deficiency of Stomach and Spleen also may cause a weakness of the knees.

19. COLD FEET

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The most common cause of cold feet is Kidney-Yang deficiency; indeed, this symptom is a relatively important one to diagnose a Kidney-Yang deficiency. Another

possible cause of cold feet, especially in women, is Liver-Blood deficiency.

Obstruction of Phlegm in the Lower Burner also may cause the feet to be cold.

20. PAIN IN THE FEET

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

By pain in the foot, we mean a localized pain, usually unilateral without swelling or redness. It is therefore different from the pain in the joints due to invasion of Wind, Cold or Dampness causing Painful Obstruction Syndrome. Pain in the foot may occur on the dorsum, the sides or the soles. The three most common causes are a Kidney deficiency (which may be of Yin or Yang), Blood deficiency and Dampness or Phlegm. When the pain extends from the side of the foot towards the sole, it is usually due to Kidney deficiency, and, if due to Kidney-Yin deficiency, it is accompanied by a feeling of heat of the soles.

A pain in the ball of the foot which is aggravated by walking if the patient is overweight is due to Damp-Phlegm.

PAIN IN THE FEET

- Cold: severe pain
- Dampness: pain with swelling
- Damp-Heat: pain, swelling, redness and heat
- Blood deficiency: chronic pain and tingling
- Phlegm: pain, numbness and tingling
- Kidney-Yang deficiency: pain and weakness
- Kidney-Yin deficiency: pain worse at night, feeling of heat in the soles

21. OEDEMA OF THE FEET

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64, 66](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 18 and 19](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

Oedema of the feet is usually due to Kidney-Yang deficiency; in this case the oedema is pitting. If the oedema is not pitting, it is due to Qi stagnation. Oedema is discussed in more detail in [Chapter 18](#).

22. PAIN IN THE SOLES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

We can differentiate three distinct areas of the sole ([Fig. 39.1](#)): the ball of the foot, which pertains to the Stomach

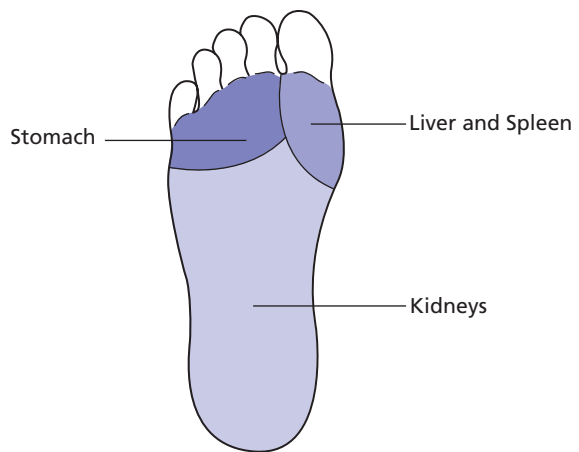


Figure 39.1. Areas of the sole.

channel; the area under the big toe, which pertains to the Liver and Spleen channels; and the rest of the sole proper, which pertains to the Kidney channel. Therefore, a pain in the ball of the foot is often due to a Stomach-Qi deficiency with invasion of Dampness in the limbs or Stomach Heat, and a pain below the big toe is often due to Liver-Fire or Dampness in the Spleen.

A pain in the sole proper is generally due to a Kidney deficiency (Yin or Yang) also with invasion of Dampness.

23. BURNING SENSATION IN THE SOLES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

A burning sensation of the soles may be due to Full Heat of the Liver or Stomach; if it is in the Liver, only the area under the big toe will feel hot; if it is in the Stomach, the ball of the foot will feel hot.

However, the most common cause of burning sensation in the soles proper is a deficiency of Kidney-Yin, usually with Empty Heat; in such a case the burning sensation is worse in the evening and at night.

24. FEELING OF HEAVINESS OF THE LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64 and 66](#)

Patients quite often spontaneously report a sensation of heaviness of the limbs, although they may not

necessarily use such terms. Patients often say that their legs ‘feel like lead’.

A feeling of heaviness of the limbs is more frequently experienced in the legs. A feeling of heaviness of the legs is always due to Dampness in the Lower Burner: Dampness may be combined with Heat or Cold and may be Full or Empty. The feeling of heaviness from Full Dampness is more pronounced than that from Dampness associated with Spleen-Qi deficiency.

When the Spleen-Qi deficiency is associated with Stomach-Qi deficiency, the feeling of heaviness is frequently experienced in all four limbs rather than just the legs. Similarly, when Phlegm causes a feeling of heaviness, it is experienced in all four limbs.

25. CRAMPS IN THE CALVES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#)

The most common cause of cramps in the calves is Liver-Blood deficiency; this symptom is more common in the elderly and frequently occurs at night. If the cramps are very severe and accompanied by numbness of the legs, they may indicate the presence of Empty-Wind stemming from Liver-Blood deficiency.

Cramps in the calves also may be caused by a combination of Wind and Phlegm in the limbs, which generally occurs only in patients over 70. If cramps in the calves are accompanied by pain, they indicate that,

in addition to Liver-Blood deficiency, there is also Liver-Blood stasis.

26. MUSCLE ACHE IN THE LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#)

Muscle ache in the limbs is nearly always due to retention of Dampness in the space between skin and muscles. This may be a Full or an Empty condition (associated with Spleen-Qi deficiency), and the Dampness may or may not be combined with Heat. If it is combined with Heat, the ache is more intense. In addition to the ache, there is a pronounced feeling of heaviness of the limbs. In a few cases, muscle ache in the limbs may be due to Liver-Blood deficiency, in which case it would be very mild and associated with tingling.

Muscle ache in the limbs is a common symptom in post-viral fatigue syndrome.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- That the limbs are influenced by the Spleen and Stomach in addition to the channels that traverse each limb.
- Why, when and how we ask about the limbs.
- About weakness, difficulty in walking, a feeling of distension or heaviness, muscle ache, numbness/tingling, generalised joint pain and tremor of the limbs.
- The pathologies specific to upper or lower limbs.

Sleep 40

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask
When we ask
How we ask
Insomnia
Excessive dreaming
Somnolence

Sleep disturbances are very common in Western patients; when asking a patient about a sleep problem, it is important to clarify whether there is difficulty in falling or staying asleep, waking up early in the morning or excessive dreaming.

WHY we ask

It is essential to ask every patient about his or her sleep because this gives an indication of the state of the Mind (*Shen*) and Ethereal Soul (*Hun*). A disturbance of the Mind and/or Ethereal Soul is of course extremely common in Western patients, whose life is generally subject to a considerable amount of stress.

The length of sleep needed varies according to age and, in general, it gradually decreases in one's lifetime, being highest in babies and lowest in the elderly. We should therefore take age into account when judging whether the patient's sleep is adequate.

WHEN we ask

I ask about sleep and dreaming early during the consultation in every case. Even if a patient does not apparently present with any problems of that kind, I always ask about sleep and dreaming to get an idea of the state of the Mind and Ethereal Soul.

HOW we ask

It is important to be specific when asking about sleep and dreaming; it will not suffice to ask 'Do you sleep

well?' I generally ask patients whether they fall asleep easily, whether they wake up during the night and whether they dream excessively. The last symptom is difficult to define, as we all dream; dreaming seems to be an essential part of sleep, performing a function that is still the subject of debate.

What, therefore, constitutes 'excessive' dreaming in Chinese medicine? I personally think this can be defined as either having many dreams to the point of feeling exhausted in the morning because of them or as having unpleasant dreams which leave one tired and slightly disturbed in the morning or even waking one up during the night. Nightmares are also a form of 'excessive dreaming' from the perspective of Chinese medicine.

If the patient dreams excessively, I then ask whether he or she has any recurrent dream. Apart from a modern psychological interpretation of dreams according to the theories of Freud, Jung and others, I always try to interpret recurrent dreams in terms of Chinese medicine. The 'Simple Questions' has a long list of dreams with their significance in Chinese medicine (listed in Part 5, [Chapter 81](#)). For example, recurrent dreams of water usually indicate a Kidney deficiency (in Jungian psychology water is a symbol of the unconscious).

The sleep-related symptoms discussed are:

1. Insomnia
2. Excessive dreaming
3. Somnolence

1. INSOMNIA

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 81](#)

In general, sleep depends on the state of Blood and Yin, especially of the Heart and Liver, although the Blood and Yin of other organs also influences sleep. During the night, Yin energy predominates and the Mind and the Ethereal Soul should be anchored in Heart-Blood and Liver-Blood, respectively ([Fig. 40.1](#)).

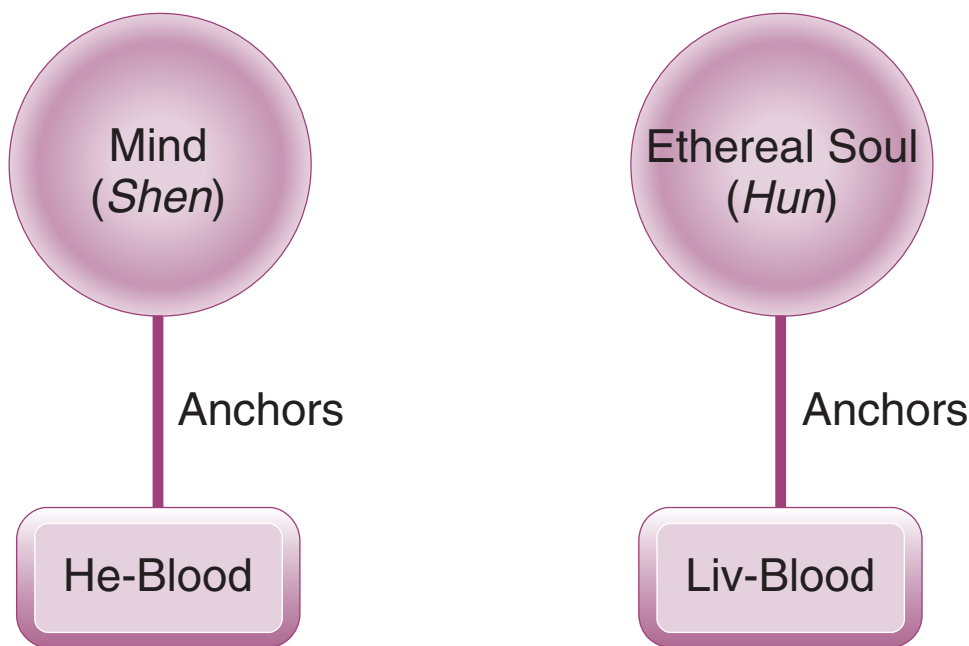


Figure 40.1. Heart-Blood and Liver-Blood as anchors or Mind and Ethereal soul.

A sleep disturbance may be due to the Mind and/or Ethereal Soul not being anchored in Heart-Blood (or Heart-Yin) and Liver-Blood (or Liver-Yin), respectively. This can happen either because there is not enough Blood or Yin to anchor the Mind and/or the Ethereal Soul or because a pathogenic factor (such as Heat) agitates them. The former is an Empty type of sleep disturbance, the latter a Full type. In both cases, the Mind and/or the Ethereal Soul is said to ‘float’ at night causing insomnia.

In general, in Deficiency conditions, a difficulty in falling asleep indicates a Blood deficiency of the Heart, Spleen or Liver, whereas difficulty in staying asleep and a tendency to wake up during the night indicate a Yin deficiency. Of course, waking up during the night also may be due to Full conditions, such as Heat, Fire, Phlegm-Fire or retention of food.



Difficulty in falling asleep generally indicates a deficiency of Blood or Yin, whereas waking during the night generally indicates Yin deficiency with Empty Heat.

When diagnosing sleep disturbances, it is important to distinguish, first, a Full from an Empty condition and, second, a Heart from a Liver pattern. Full conditions are characterized by very restless sleep with a feeling

of heat, agitation and excessive dreaming. Empty conditions are characterized by not being able to fall or stay asleep without any of the above symptoms. A Liver pattern causing insomnia is characterized by excessive dreaming and, when compared with a Heart pattern, a more severe restlessness.

However, the Heart and Liver are not the only organs that may cause insomnia: the Stomach, Spleen, Kidneys and Gall-Bladder may play a role in insomnia. For example, a deficiency of Spleen-Blood often accompanies a deficiency of Heart-Blood and contributes to causing insomnia (the famous formula *Gui Pi Tang Tonifying the Spleen Decoction* treats insomnia from these patterns). Kidney-Yin, like Liver-Yin, also needs to anchor the Mind and the Ethereal Soul at night, and therefore a deficiency of Kidney-Yin, with or without Empty Heat, is also a frequent cause of insomnia.

A deficiency of the Gall-Bladder and Heart may cause someone to wake up early in the morning without being able to fall asleep again.

A less common cause of insomnia is residual Heat in the diaphragm, which may occur after an invasion of Wind-Heat; this is obviously an acute type of insomnia with recent onset.

For a detailed description of the patterns causing insomnia, see Part 5, [Chapter 81](#) on ‘Sleep’. [Figure 40.2](#)

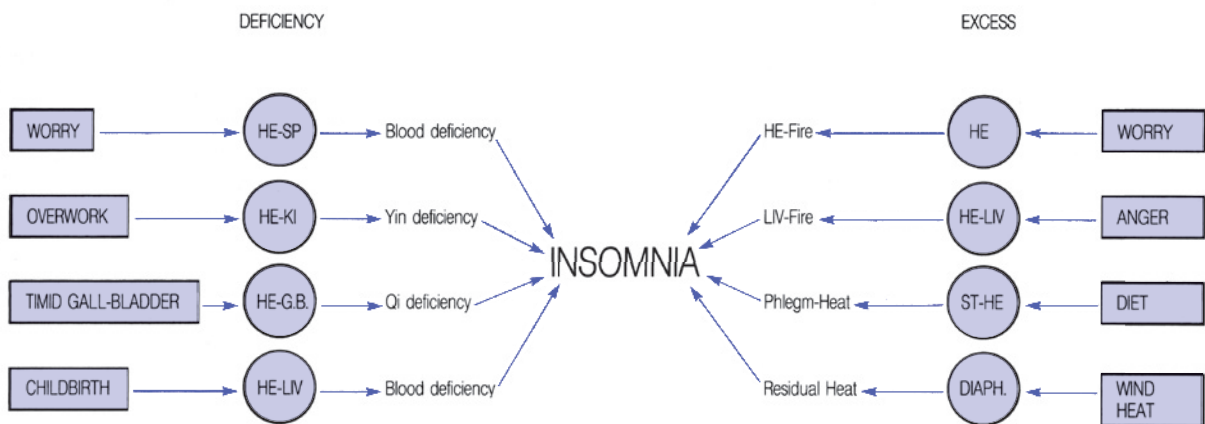


Figure 40.2. Aetiology and pathology of insomnia.

summarizes the aetiology and pathology of insomnia differentiated into Empty and Full patterns.

To summarize, the main patterns appearing in insomnia are:

- Heart-Blood deficiency: insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep, palpitations, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse
- Deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Spleen and Heart: insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep, palpitations, tiredness, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse
- Heart-Yin deficiency: insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep, palpitations, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse
- Liver-Blood deficiency: insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep, dreaming, dizziness, blurred vision, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse
- Liver-Yin deficiency: insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep, dreaming, dizziness, blurred vision, dry eyes, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse
- Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency: insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep, dizziness, tinnitus, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse
- Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty Heat: insomnia, waking up frequently during the night, anxiety, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse
- Gall-Bladder and Heart deficiency: easily awakened at night and easily startled, with difficulty in going back to sleep, or apt to wake up early in the morning, depression, timidity, hypochondrial discomfort, palpitations
- Liver-Fire: insomnia, excessive dreaming, restless sleep, propensity to outbursts of anger, headaches, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse
- Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart: restless sleep, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, sputum in throat, Red tongue with redder tip and a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse
- Heart-Fire: restless sleep, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, agitation, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse
- Residual Heat in the diaphragm: restless sleep, prefers to sleep propped up, inability to fall asleep, mental restlessness, a feeling of oppression of the diaphragm, red points in the front or around the centre of the tongue, slightly Rapid pulse.



TREATMENT

Blood or Yin deficiency (of Heart, Spleen or Liver): HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Du-24 Shenting, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.
 Yin deficiency with Empty Heat (of most organs but especially Heart, Liver or Kidneys): HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Du-24 Shenting, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi.
 Full Heat (Heart, Liver or Stomach), Phlegm-Fire (Stomach and/or Heart): HE-8 Shaofu, ST-44 Neiting, LI-11 Quchi, ST-40 Fenglong.
 Empty Heat (Heart, Liver or Kidneys): HE-6 Yinxi, KI-3 Taixi, HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-4 Guanyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-15 Jiuwei.
 Retention of food: Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-10 Xiawan, ST-44 Neiting, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-4 Gongsun.
 Gall-Bladder and Heart deficiency: G.B.-40 Qiuxu.

INSOMNIA

- Insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep: Blood or Yin deficiency (of Heart, Spleen or Liver)
- Insomnia with difficulty in staying asleep: Yin deficiency with Empty Heat (of most organs but especially Heart, Liver or Kidneys)
- Restless sleep with excessive dreaming: Full Heat (Heart, Liver or Stomach), Phlegm-Fire (Stomach and/or Heart)
- Waking up at night with a dry mouth, dreaming, night-sweating: Empty Heat (Heart, Liver or Kidneys)
- Restless sleep with abdominal fullness: retention of food
- Waking up early in the morning: Gall-Bladder and Heart deficiency

2. EXCESSIVE DREAMING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 81

Excessive dreaming is another common sleep disturbance which is usually due to a pathogenic factor agitating the Ethereal Soul. This may be either a pathogenic factor such as Fire or Phlegm-Fire or Empty Heat deriving from Yin deficiency.

‘Excessive dreaming’ is difficult to define because dreaming is a normal, physiological aspect of sleep. From the perspective of Chinese medicine it can be defined as a level of dreaming, whether pleasant or unpleasant, that makes the sleeper restless or wakes the patient. It also includes nightmares, especially when they are recurrent. Other doctors define ‘excessive dreaming’ as waking up with an unpleasant feeling from dreaming; by implication, from a Chinese perspective, ‘normal’ dreaming is not remembered in the morning.

‘Excessive dreaming’ was called *Ye You*, which means ‘wandering at night’; *Meng You*, which means ‘wandering in one’s dream’; or *Meng Xing*, which means ‘moving in one’s dream’; these terms are a clear reference to the wandering of the Ethereal Soul at night when we dream too much.

With the exception of Heart and Gall-Bladder deficiency, excessive dreaming is usually caused by a Full condition, generally of the Liver or Heart, such as Liver-Fire, Heart-Fire or Phlegm-Fire in the Heart. Full conditions of the Stomach also frequently cause excessive dreaming and especially Phlegm-Fire in the Stomach and retention of food.

For a description of the patterns involved in excessive dreaming and the meaning of dreams according to the ‘Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine’ see Part 5, Chapter 81.

To summarize, the main patterns causing excessive dreaming are:

- Liver-Fire: excessive dreaming, nightmares, restless sleep, headaches, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse
- Heart-Fire: excessive dreaming, restless sleep, palpitations, insomnia, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse
- Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart: excessive dreaming, restless sleep, insomnia, waking from nightmares, palpitations, agitation, sputum in throat, Red tongue with redder tip and a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse
- Phlegm-Fire in the Stomach: excessive, agitated dreams, restless sleep, burning epigastric pain, insomnia, Red tongue with a sticky-yellow or dark-yellow (or even black) coating, Stomach crack with a rough, sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid and slightly Overflowing pulse on the Right-Middle position
- Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: dream-disturbed sleep, insomnia, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse
- Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: dream-disturbed sleep, insomnia, blurred vision, dry eyes, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and slightly Rapid pulse
- Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, dizziness, tinnitus, Red tongue with redder tip without coating, mid-line Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse or Deep-Weak on both Rear positions and relatively Overflowing on both Front positions
- Heart and Gall-Bladder deficiency: excessive dreaming, waking easily from dreaming, absent-minded, emotionally unstable, anxiety and palpitations

EXCESSIVE DREAMING

- Liver-Fire
- Heart-Fire
- Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart
- Phlegm-Fire in the Stomach
- Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
- Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
- Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
- Heart and Gall-Bladder deficiency

3. SOMNOLENCE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 81](#); Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 40

Somnolence means dozing off frequently in the daytime or early evening. Some Chinese books also add that the patient wakes up as he or she breathes out and then dozes off again. ‘Somnolence’ also includes some people’s physiological need of sleeping a longer time than normal which, in adults, is approximately 7 to 8 hours.

Somnolence may be due to a Deficiency, usually of Qi and/or Yang, or to an Excess, such as Dampness or Phlegm. The most common situation is a combination of a deficiency (of the Spleen and/or Kidneys) and a Full condition consisting of Dampness or Phlegm.

Of course, when a patient complains of somnolence, one should first enquire about the patient’s working hours. If the patient works very long hours (a very common occurrence in Western industrialized societies) somnolence is then not a pathological symptom.

For a detailed description of the patterns causing somnolence, see Part 5, [Chapter 81](#) on ‘Sleep’.

SOMNOLENCE

- Spleen-Yang deficiency: somnolence, desire to lie down, loose stools, Pale tongue, Weak pulse
- Kidney-Yang deficiency: somnolence, listlessness, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, Pale-Swollen tongue, Deep-Weak pulse
- Dampness: somnolence after eating, feeling of heaviness, sticky coating, Slippery pulse
- Phlegm: somnolence after eating and in the morning, muzziness of the head, dizziness, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how we ask about sleep to ascertain the health of the Mind (*Shen*) and the Ethereal Soul (*Hun*).
- Insomnia caused by Full or Empty and Heart or Liver patterns.
- That excessive dreaming reflects a pathology affecting the Ethereal Soul.
- The clinical significance of somnolence.

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Sweating

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask

When we ask

How we ask

Clinical significance of sweating in exterior patterns

Clinical significance of sweating in interior patterns

Pathology of sweating

Classification of sweating

Area of body

Time of day

Condition of illness

Quality of sweat

Absence of sweating

Excessive sweating is always considered a symptom requiring the doctor's attention in Chinese medicine. In order to define 'excessive sweating' we should bear in mind that under certain circumstances sweating is a normal physiological process. For example, it is normal to sweat during exercise, after eating spicy foods, in very hot weather and when under acute emotional strain.

WHY we ask

Daytime spontaneous sweating is not a crucial area of questioning for various reasons. First of all, it is a symptom that only Chinese patients are particularly aware of and which they therefore often report spontaneously. Western patients report this symptom quite rarely. In terms of clinical significance as part of a pattern, daytime spontaneous sweating is seldom a crucial manifestation that clinches a diagnosis.

An exception to this occurs when we see a patient during an acute invasion of Wind, in which case we should always ask whether there is sweating. The presence of sweating indicates that the pathogenic factor is either Wind-Heat or Wind-Cold but with the prevalence of Wind (Wind Attack Pattern of the Greater-Yang

Pattern within the Six Stages) and that the patient's Upright Qi is relatively weak. Conversely, absence of sweating during an invasion of external Wind generally indicates that Cold predominates over Wind and that the patient's Upright Qi is strong.

Night-sweating is quite different in so far as Western patients are more aware of this symptom; in particular, in menopausal women this is a major symptom that is definitely reported by the patient. Night-sweating is clinically significant to clinch the diagnosis of Yin deficiency (although it should be remembered that other patterns may cause night-sweating, e.g. Damp-Heat, Stomach Heat, etc.).

WHEN we ask

I ask about daytime sweating mostly to confirm a diagnosis of Lung-Qi deficiency and about night-sweating to confirm a diagnosis of Yin deficiency. If night-time sweating appears without any manifestation of Yin deficiency, then we need to think again and check whether this symptom is being caused by Damp-Heat or other less common patterns.

HOW we ask

When asking about daytime sweating, I generally ask, '*Do you tend to sweat abnormally even in the absence of exercise?*' In the case of night-time sweating, the question is easier and I simply ask, '*Do you tend to sweat at night sometimes?*' We should, however, exclude night-sweating that is simply caused by too heavy a blanket and too hot a bedroom.

Evaluation of symptoms of sweating must be made by considering if it is part of an Exterior or Interior pattern and the discussion will be articulated in the following five headings:

1. Clinical significance of sweating in Exterior patterns
2. Clinical significance of sweating in Interior patterns

3. Pathology of sweating
4. Classification of sweating
5. Absence of sweating

1. CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SWEATING IN EXTERIOR PATTERNS

In Exterior patterns, spontaneous sweating indicates either invasion of Wind-Cold with the prevalence of Wind, due to a disharmony of Nutritive and Defensive Qi, or invasion of Wind-Heat. In invasion of Wind-Cold with the prevalence of Wind, the deficient Nutritive Qi fails to hold fluids in the space between skin and muscles, the pores are open and the patient sweats slightly. It is important to note that this is not a profuse, spontaneous sweating and the patient may not be aware of it unless we ask. In Exterior patterns, slight sweating may occur during invasions of Wind-Heat, Wind-Dampness or Summer-Heat.

In the course of acute febrile diseases, when the pathogenic factor penetrates into the Interior there is often profuse sweating, such as at the Bright-Yang stage of the Six Stages or the Qi Level of the Four Levels.

2. CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SWEATING IN INTERIOR PATTERNS

In Interior patterns, spontaneous sweating is due to Qi or Yang deficiency or to Full-Heat if it occurs in daytime and to Yin deficiency or Damp-Heat if it occurs at night. In Qi or Yang deficiency it is usually a deficiency of Lungs or Heart; in Full-Heat, it is usually Heat (or Damp-Heat) in the Heart, Liver, Lungs or Stomach.

To summarize, the patterns causing day-time sweating in Interior conditions are:

- Qi deficiency (of Lungs and/or Heart)
- Yang deficiency (of Lungs, Heart or Kidneys)
- collapse of Yang or Yin
- Liver-Fire
- Heart-Fire
- Lung-Heat
- Stomach-Heat
- Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen
- Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs
- Phlegm-Heat in the Heart
- Phlegm-Heat in the Stomach.

The main patterns causing night-sweating are:

- Yin deficiency (of any organ)
- Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
- Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen
- deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Heart.



Night-sweating is NOT always due to Yin deficiency.

3. PATHOLOGY OF SWEATING

Daytime sweating involves loss of fluids from the space between skin and muscles where the Defensive Qi circulates. Sweating at night (called *Dao Han* in Chinese, which literally means 'thief sweating') involves loss of fluids from the bone level and is often called 'steaming from the bones'. Thus, the former are ordinary Body Fluids (*Jin-Ye*), whereas the latter are Yin essences. Therefore, the fluids lost during night-sweating are more precious, Yin-type fluids than those lost during daytime sweating; the fluids lost during daytime sweating are simply body fluids, whereas those lost during night-sweating are nutritive Yin essences. However, both daytime and night-time sweating start a pathological vicious circle because they can derive from a deficiency but they also aggravate that deficiency. In fact, daytime sweating injures Qi (the pores are called 'Qi holes') whereas night-sweating injures Yin.

Old Chinese books say that night-time sweat tastes sweet (because it is a Yin essence), whereas sweat lost in daytime tastes salty.

Besides daytime and night-time sweating, there are two other types of sweating: Sweating from Collapse (*Jue Han*) and Shiver Sweating (*Zhan Han*).

Sweating from Collapse occurs during collapse of Yang or collapse of Yin: the sweat from collapse of Yin is oily, whereas that from collapse of Yang pours out in watery and dilute drops.

Shiver sweating is usually seen in acute, febrile diseases and is characterized by a bout of shivering followed by sweating. If the fever abates after sweating, and the pulse is quiet and the body feels cold to the touch, it means the pathogenic factor has been expelled and the Upright Qi has prevailed; but if after sweating there is restlessness and the pulse is Rapid, it indicates that the pathogenic factor has prevailed and the Upright Qi has been severely weakened.

4. CLASSIFICATION OF SWEATING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 76](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

One must distinguish sweating according to the area of body, time of day, conditions and quality of sweat.

A) Area of body

- Only on head: Heat or Damp-Heat in the Stomach, Heat in the Upper Burner, deficient Yang floating upwards, retention of food
- Only on hands and feet: deficiency of Qi or Yin of the Lungs or Heart and Kidneys. It could also be due to Heat in the Lungs or Heart and Kidneys.
- Oily sweat on forehead: collapse of Yin
- Only on nose: Damp-Heat in the Lungs and/or Stomach
- Only on arms and legs: Stomach and Spleen deficiency
- Only on hands: deficiency of Qi or Yin of the Lungs or Heart, or Heat in the Lungs or Heart
- Whole body: Lung-Qi deficiency
- On palms, soles and chest: Yin deficiency (called five-palm sweat)

B) Time of day

- In daytime: Yang deficiency
- At night-time: Yin deficiency (in some cases it can also be from Damp-Heat)

C) Condition of illness

- Profuse cold sweat during a severe illness: collapse of Yang
- Oily sweat on forehead, like pearls, not flowing: collapse of Yang, danger of imminent death

D) Quality of sweat

- Oily: severe Yang deficiency
- Yellow: Damp-Heat

5. ABSENCE OF SWEATING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 76](#)

Absence of sweating is also a symptom in Chinese medicine. In exterior invasions of Wind, it is always important to ask about sweating. The absence of sweating indicates invasion of Wind-Cold with the prevalence of Cold, and this corresponds to the Greater-Yang stage within the Six-Stage Identification of Patterns. The Greater-Yang stage is always caused by the invasion of Wind-Cold, of which there are two types: one with the prevalence of Cold (in which there is no sweating), and the other with the prevalence of Wind (in which there is sweating).

In other Exterior conditions, absence of sweating usually indicates Cold or Cold-Dampness in the superficial layers of the body (the space between skin and muscles).

In Interior conditions, absence of sweating indicates a 'tight' and excessively closed state of the space between skin and muscles (*Cou Li*). This renders the person more prone to fever when invaded by a pathogenic factor and also indicates that the person is more prone to Full than Empty conditions.

For a more detailed description of various types of sweating, see Part 5, [Chapter 76](#) on 'Sweating'.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

To understand:

- Why, when and how we ask about sweating.
- The clinical significance of Exterior and Interior patterns.
- The pathology, absence of sweat, and classification: area of body, time, condition of illness and quality of sweat.

Ears and Eyes 42

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Ears

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When we ask

How we ask

Tinnitus

Deafness

Earache

Itchy ears

Eyes

Why we ask

When we ask

How we ask

Eye pain

Blurred vision

Itchy eyes

Feeling of distension of the eyes

Streaming eyes

Dry eyes

1. EARS

The ears are the orifices of the Kidneys, and for this reason tinnitus and deafness are often due to a Kidney deficiency. However, the ears are influenced by many other organs, including the Liver, Heart, Lungs and Gall-Bladder. In addition, although the Spleen is not directly related to the ears, Dampness or Phlegm (deriving from Spleen-Qi deficiency) also may affect the ears.

WHY we ask

I generally ask about any ear symptoms under three main circumstances: when there is a Kidney deficiency, Liver-Yang rising or Phlegm. In the latter case, Phlegm obstructs the orifices and may cause tinnitus or deafness.

WHEN we ask

I usually ask about any ear symptoms towards the end of the consultation primarily to confirm a pattern of Kidney deficiency, Liver-Yang rising or Phlegm.

HOW we ask

When asking about tinnitus it is important to express this symptom in terms patients can understand. I generally ask whether they experience any 'ringing in the ears'. It is important to let the patient understand that even an occasional ringing in the ears has clinical significance.

In general terms, the ears may be affected by a Deficiency pathology (usually of the Kidneys but also of the Lung and Heart) causing tinnitus, hardness of hearing or deafness or by a Fullness pathology that is usually due to Heat or Phlegm.

The main Deficiency patterns affecting the ear are:

- Kidney deficiency (or Yin or Yang) causing tinnitus and/or deafness
- Lung-Qi deficiency causing tinnitus
- Heart-Blood deficiency causing tinnitus.

The main Full patterns affecting the ears are:

- Liver-Yang rising causing tinnitus and deafness
- Liver-Fire causing tinnitus and deafness
- Phlegm in the head causing tinnitus
- Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder causing earache.

The symptoms discussed are:

- a) Tinnitus
- b) Deafness
- c) Earache
- d) Itchy ears

a) Tinnitus

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

Tinnitus is caused by either failure of Qi to rise to the ears (Empty type) or an excess of Qi in the ears (Full

type). In order to differentiate between the Empty types and the Full types, we need to consider the onset, pitch, duration and reaction to pressure of the tinnitus.

A sudden onset suggests a Full condition which may be internal, such as Liver-Fire or Liver-Wind, or external, such as Heat in the Lesser Yang. A gradual onset suggests an Empty condition which may be due to a deficiency of the Kidneys, Lung or Heart.

A loud, high-pitched, ringing noise like a whistle indicates Liver-Yang rising, Liver-Fire or Liver-Wind, whereas a low-pitched noise like rushing water indicates a Kidney deficiency.

Tinnitus of short duration is usually due to an external invasion of Wind-Heat affecting the Lesser Yang channels, whereas chronic tinnitus of long duration is due to either a Kidney deficiency or a Liver pathology (Liver-Yang rising, Liver-Fire, Liver-Wind).

If the tinnitus is aggravated by pressing one's hands on the ears, it suggests a Full condition; if it is alleviated it suggests an Empty condition.

TINNITUS

- Tinnitus with sudden onset and alternation of chills and fever: Lesser-Yang pattern
- Tinnitus with sudden onset and headache: Liver-Fire or Liver-Yang rising
- High-pitched tinnitus: Liver-Fire or Liver-Yang rising
- Low-pitched tinnitus: Kidney deficiency
- Chronic, severe tinnitus: Liver-Fire, Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Wind
- Chronic, mild, intermittent tinnitus: Kidney deficiency
- Chronic, mild, intermittent tinnitus with palpitations and weak voice: Deficiency of Heart- and Lung-Qi

Case History

A 56-year-old woman had been suffering from tinnitus for 3 years. The onset had been slow and gradual, and the ear noise was low-pitch. She also suffered from poor memory, lack of concentration, blurred vision, dizziness and hot flushes (flashes). On asking her, it transpired that she also experienced a dry mouth, anxiety and palpitations. Her urine was dark. She also said that she startled easily.

She occasionally experienced a dull ache in the chest, with the pain sensation extending up to the neck like a 'steel band'.

Her periods had stopped 2 years previously. Her tongue was Red, with a redder tip, entirely without

coating and dry. Her pulse was Weak on both Rear positions and very slightly Wiry but Fine on the left.

Diagnosis

This patient presents with very clear manifestations of Kidney-Yin deficiency (dark urine, tinnitus, dizziness, blurred vision and hot flushes) and Heart-Yin deficiency (poor memory and concentration, palpitations, anxiety and propensity to be startled). The conditions of Yin deficiency are shown very clearly by the absence of coating and the redness of the tongue (combined with the lack of coating) clearly indicates Empty-Heat. I interpreted the dull ache in the chest extending to the neck as a symptom of rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel, a common complicating factor in menopausal problems. The Wiry quality of the pulse on the left supports this diagnosis.

b) Deafness

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 57

The diagnostic criteria of deafness or hardness of hearing are similar to those of tinnitus: an acute onset points to a Fullness, and a gradual onset points to a Deficiency. The main Excess causes of deafness or hardness of hearing are Liver-Fire, Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm-Fire affecting the Liver channel.

The main Empty cause of deafness or hardness of hearing is a Kidney deficiency (the most common cause in the elderly). However, the Kidneys are not the only organ that influences the ears and hardness of hearing also may be caused by Heart-Blood deficiency, deficiency of the Gathering Qi (*Zong-Qi*) or Yang-Qi deficiency. In all these cases, hardness of hearing is due to Qi or Blood not flowing upwards to the ears.

DEAFNESS

- Kidney deficiency: dizziness, tinnitus, backache
- Liver-Yang rising: dizziness, tinnitus, headache
- Liver-Fire: tinnitus, thirst, bitter taste
- Phlegm-Fire in the Liver channel: dizziness, tinnitus, sputum in throat, headache
- Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency: dizziness, palpitations, insomnia
- Lung- and Heart-Qi deficiency: palpitation, shortness of breath, weak voice
- Heart-Blood deficiency: palpitations, poor memory, insomnia

c) Earache

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

With the exception of Qi and Blood stagnation, earache is usually due to Heat: this can be an invasion of Wind-Heat affecting the Lesser Yang channels (very common in children), Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder channel or Liver-Fire. A yellow discharge from the ear may accompany an invasion of Wind-Heat or Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder. The earache from Qi and Blood stagnation is not common and is usually seen only in the elderly.

EARACHE

- Wind-Heat in Lesser Yang channels: aversion to cold, fever
- Damp-Heat in Gall-Bladder: ear discharge
- Liver-Fire: headache, red face, bitter taste in mouth
- Qi and Blood stagnation: chronic earache (in the elderly)

d) Itchy ears

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 57](#)

In acute cases, itchiness in the ears is due to invasion of Wind-Heat in the Lesser Yang channels. In chronic cases, it is due either to Blood deficiency leading to internal Wind or to Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat.

1. EYES

The eyes are the orifice of the Liver, but this does not mean that all eye problems are related to the Liver. In fact, other organs affect the eyes, and notable among these are the Heart, Kidneys and Gall-Bladder.

The Heart influences the eyes as both its Main and Connecting channels go to the eyeballs. For this reason, many eye problems are due to Heart-Heat deriving from emotional problems.

The Kidneys nourish and moisten the eyes in a manner similar to the Liver, and eye problems in the elderly are very frequently due to a Kidney deficiency.

The Gall-Bladder channel also goes through the eyes and may cause eye problems, usually in conjunction with Liver-Fire or Liver-Yang rising.

WHY we ask

The questions regarding the eyes are somewhat more important than those regarding the ears, first because eye problems are more common and second because

some eye symptoms often clinch a diagnosis. For example, the symptom of dry eyes often clinches the diagnosis of Liver-Yin deficiency (although it may be caused by Kidney-Yin deficiency too).

WHEN we ask

I ask about eye symptoms early during the interrogation in conjunction with questions aimed at identifying a particular pattern. For example, if a patient displays symptoms of Liver-Blood deficiency, I would ask about blurred vision and floaters immediately. I would then ask about dry eyes to find out whether the Liver-Blood deficiency has progressed to a deeper level of Liver-Yin deficiency.

Questions regarding blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, and red/painful/itchy eyes are important and I ask them in nearly every case.

HOW we ask

'Blurred vision' is not an expression most patients are familiar with. I generally ask them whether their vision is sometimes 'not clear or somewhat obfuscated', stressing that the condition at issue is quite apart from their being short-sighted or not. 'Floaters' is another expression most patients are not familiar with, and I generally ask whether they ever see 'black or white spots floating in the field of vision'.

The eye symptoms discussed are:

- a) Eye pain
- b) Blurred vision
- c) Itchy eyes
- d) Feeling of distension of the eyes
- e) Streaming eyes
- f) Dry eyes

a) Eye pain

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

i) Full or Empty character of eye pain

[Table 42.1](#) summarizes the Full and Empty characteristics of eye pain.

ii) Radiation of pain

Eye pain also should be differentiated according to its radiation. If the pain radiates to the occiput, the Greater Yang channels are affected; if it radiates to the sides of the head and the outer corners of the eyes, the Lesser Yang channels are affected; if it radiates to the nose

Table 42.1 Full and Empty character of eye pain

Character	Full/Yang	Empty/Yin
Onset	Sudden	Gradual
Time	Day	Night
Time of day	Morning	Afternoon
Constancy	Chronic and persistent	Chronic on and off
Swelling	With swelling	Without swelling
Intensity	Severe, unbearable	Dull, mild
Inflammation	Inflamed, red and hot	Not red, not hot
Pressure	Worse with pressure	Better with pressure
Temperature	Worse with heat, better with cold	Worse with cold, better with heat
Irritability	Pain with irritability (Liver)	Pain without irritability (Yang deficiency)
Character of pain	Pain like needles	Mild pain
Food	Worse after eating	Better after eating, worse when hungry
Two excretions (urination and defecation)	Redness, excretions affected	No redness, excretions not affected
Eyeball movement	With moving eyeballs	Eyeballs not moving

and teeth, the Bright Yang channels are affected; and if it radiates to the top of the head, the Liver channel is affected.

iii) Eye pain of internal or external origin

Eye pain should be differentiated between internal and external; furthermore, internal eye pain should be differentiated between Deficiency and Excess, as indicated in Table 42.1.

Eye pain of external origin is mainly due to invasion of Wind-Heat and is characterized by a sudden onset, sticky eyelids and streaming eyes.

Eye pain of internal origin should be differentiated between Deficiency and Excess. The most common internal, Excess types of eye pain are:

- Liver-Yang rising
- Liver-Fire
- Heart-Fire
- Liver-Wind
- Damp-Heat
- Phlegm-Heat
- Blood stasis.

Eye pain from a Full condition is often accompanied by swelling and redness.

The most common types of eye pain due to Deficiency are:

- Liver-Blood deficiency
- Heart-Blood deficiency
- Kidney deficiency.

EYE PAIN

Full

- Wind-Heat: acute onset, aversion to cold, fever
- Liver-Fire: red eyes, thirst, bitter taste, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Yang rising: headache, eye distension
- Heart-Fire: red eyes, palpitations, anxiety
- Liver-Wind: vertigo
- Damp-Heat: sticky eyelids, sticky-yellow tongue coating
- Phlegm-Heat: sticky eyelids, feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness
- Blood stasis: bulging eyes, dark complexion, Purple tongue

Empty

- Liver-Blood deficiency: dizziness, blurred vision
- Heart-Blood deficiency: insomnia, poor memory, palpitations
- Kidney deficiency: dizziness, tinnitus
- Deficiency of Qi and Yin: slightly hot and painful eyes, mild pain, desire to shut eyes, red eyes, tiredness, dry eyes

b) Blurred vision

Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 61

Blurred vision, called *Mu Xuan* in Chinese, indicates not only blurring of vision and floaters but also includes a slight dizziness.

Although blurred vision is a relatively common complaint, when asked whether they suffer from it most patients will either answer negatively or not know what we mean. Thus, this question should be asked in a different way, such as ‘Do you have any problems with your vision?’ or ‘Is your vision sometimes unclear?’

First of all, it should be remembered that the eyes are under the control not only of the Liver but also of the Gall-Bladder and Kidneys; especially in the elderly,

a Kidney deficiency is often at the root of eye problems and blurred vision.

Among the Deficiency types, the most common causes of blurred vision are Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency. If blurred vision is associated with dryness of the eyes, it suggests either Liver-Yin deficiency or Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency; this is common in the elderly.

Blurred vision also may be due to Excess patterns such as Gall-Bladder Heat, Liver-Yang rising (a common feature in migraine), Liver-Fire and Phlegm. Phlegm, in particular, is not often recognized as a possible cause of blurred vision; it may cause blurring of vision because it obstructs the clear orifices of the head, including the eyes (for the same reason, Phlegm may cause tinnitus).

BLURRED VISION

- Liver-Blood deficiency: floaters, dizziness
- Liver-Yin deficiency: dry eyes
- Kidney-Yin deficiency: dizziness, tinnitus
- Gall-Bladder Heat: eye pain, red eyes
- Liver-Yang rising: headache
- Liver-Fire: red, painful eyes
- Phlegm: dizziness, muzziness

c) Itchy eyes

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

Excluding invasions of external Wind, itchy eyes are usually caused either by Liver-Fire or a deficiency of Liver-Blood giving rise to Liver-Wind. Itchy eyes in allergic rhinitis are a separate pathology which is not Liver-related, but is related to external Wind because the reaction caused by the invasion of allergens mimics that of invasion of external Wind.

d) Feeling of distension of the eyes

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

A feeling of distension of the eyes is often associated with emotional problems affecting the Liver causing Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Fire.

e) Streaming eyes

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#); Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Streaming eyes may be due to Heat of the Full or Empty type. In particular, it may be due to Full or Empty Heat of the Lung or Stomach.

Other causes of streaming eyes include external Wind-Heat, Liver-Fire and Liver-Blood deficiency

associated with Liver-Heat. In some cases, streaming eyes may be due to Liver-Blood deficiency and general Qi deficiency or Kidney-Yang deficiency; these two types of streaming eyes are called 'cold streaming'.

STREAMING EYES

- Lung-Heat: cough
- Lung Empty-Heat: dry cough
- Stomach Heat: epigastric pain, thirst
- Stomach Empty Heat: epigastric pain, thirst with desire to sip
- External Wind-Heat: aversion to cold, fever
- Liver-Fire: red eyes, bitter taste
- Liver-Blood deficiency with some Heat: blurred vision, red eyes
- Liver-Blood deficiency: blurred vision
- Kidney-Yang deficiency: backache, abundant-clear urine
- General Qi deficiency: tiredness, loose stools, weak voice

f) Dry eyes

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 61](#)

The most common causes of dry eyes are severe Liver-Blood deficiency or Liver-Yin deficiency. In the elderly, dry eyes are often due to Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency; in some cases Lung-Yin deficiency is also involved. Dry eyes with acute onset may be due to invasion of Wind-Heat in which case they would also be red.

DRY EYES

- Liver-Yin deficiency: blurred vision
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency: dizziness, tinnitus
- Lung-Yin deficiency: dry cough
- External Wind-Heat: aversion to cold, fever



LEARNING OUTCOMES

To understand:

- That the ears are the orifices of the Kidneys but are influenced by many other organs.
- Why, when and how we ask about the ears.
- The clinical significance of tinnitus, deafness, earache and itchy ears.
- That the eyes are the orifice of the Liver but are influenced by many other organs.
- Why, when and how we ask about the eyes.
- The clinical significance of eye pain, itchy eyes, feeling of distension of the eyes, streaming or dry eyes, and blurred vision.

43

Feeling of Cold, Feeling of Heat and Fever

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask**When we ask****How we ask****Terminology****Feeling of cold***Feeling of cold in interior conditions**Feeling of cold in exterior conditions**How to distinguish between external and internal causes of feeling of cold***Simultaneous feeling of cold and fever in exterior conditions***Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat**Summer-Heat**Damp-Heat**Dry-Heat***Alternating feeling of cold and feeling of heat****Feeling of heat from internal causes****Internal fever***Acute fever**Chronic fever***Five-palm heat****Contradictory feelings of cold and heat in internal conditions***Simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang**Blood deficiency**Disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel**Yin Fire*

Questions about a feeling of cold or heat and fever are generally asked towards the end of the interrogation to establish the Hot or Cold nature of a pattern.

WHY we ask

We should always ask all our patients about feelings of cold or heat; the clinical significance, however, varies in internal and external conditions. In internal conditions (which constitute the overwhelming majority of most practices) the distinction between feelings of cold and

feelings of heat simply tells us about the Cold or Hot nature of the prevailing pattern.

In external conditions (e.g. when a patient presents with an acute cold or influenza), questions about feelings of cold or heat are needed primarily to establish, first of all, whether it is indeed an external condition and whether the pathogenic factor is in the Exterior or Interior.

The patient's cold or hot feeling should never be discounted, even when it contradicts the tongue and/or pulse. For example, a patient may have a clearly Red tongue but always feel cold; although the sign of a Red tongue is very important, we should not discount the cold feeling and should investigate further to find the cause of this discrepancy.

WHEN we ask

As mentioned above, questions about feelings of cold and heat should always be asked routinely in all patients.

In *internal conditions*, questions about a patient feeling cold or hot are often asked towards the end of the consultation to confirm the existence of a Cold or Hot pattern. Often questions about feelings of cold or heat also help detect the constitutional tendency of a patient to Cold or Hot conditions. For example, a patient may not have significant symptoms of Yang deficiency and Cold but, on asking, may say she always feels cold, needs to wear more clothes than other people, etc.; this symptom should never be discounted because it indicates an underlying tendency to Yang deficiency and Cold patterns.

In *external conditions*, questions about feelings of cold and heat are crucial and should always be asked in detail to establish whether the pathogenic factor has gone into the Interior or whether it is still on the Exterior. If we see a patient every day in the course of an acute, exterior condition, as we should, we should carefully ask about feelings of cold and heat every day to establish the exterior or interior nature of the pattern.

HOW we ask

In China, the questions about feeling of cold and feeling of heat coincide almost exactly with the terminology of Chinese medicine, which makes it very easy for Chinese doctors. With Western patients, it is a little more difficult and we need to make sure we ask patients about feelings of cold and heat in a way they can readily understand.

In interior conditions, for feelings of cold we should simply ask, 'Do you feel cold in general?', 'Do you have a tendency to feel cold?' or 'Do you notice that you feel colder than other people?'; for feelings of heat, we should ask questions such as, 'Would you say you feel hot in general?', 'Do you sometimes feel unusually hot?' or 'Do you want to open the window when everyone else wants it closed?' If the patient answers affirmatively to one of the above questions about feelings of heat, we should go on to ask more specifically about when he tends to feel hot in order to establish whether it is Full or Empty Heat; we therefore ask questions such as 'Do you tend to feel hotter in the afternoon or evening?'

I shall discuss the following topics:

1. Feeling of cold
 - a) Feeling of cold in interior conditions
 - b) Feeling of cold in exterior conditions
 - c) How to distinguish between external and internal causes of feeling of cold
2. Simultaneous feeling of cold and fever in exterior conditions
3. Alternating feeling of cold and feeling of heat
4. Feeling of heat from internal causes
5. Internal fever
6. Five-palm heat
7. Contradictory feelings of cold and heat in internal conditions

TERMINOLOGY

Before discussing the various causes of feeling cold, or feeling of hot and feverish, I would like to clarify some points regarding terminology, particularly with regard to fever.

The *cause* of disease in feeling of cold, feeling of heat or fever may be *external* (e.g. external Wind) or *internal*; thus, the cause of disease simply refers to the origin of the pathogenic factor.

The *pattern* (or *syndrome*) refers to the location of the pathogenic factor, which may be in the *Interior* or *Exterior*. This is decided *not* according to the origin of

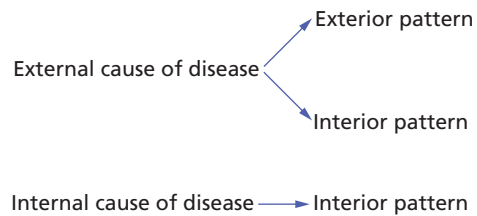


Figure 43.1. Relationship between external and internal causes of disease with exterior and interior patterns.

the pathogenic factor but on the basis of the clinical manifestations. In other words, an *external* cause of disease (e.g. external Wind) may cause both an *exterior* pattern and an *interior* pattern (Fig. 43.1).

An *external* cause of disease is, for example, external Wind, which causes initially an *exterior* pattern. If the pathogenic factor is not expelled, it goes on to cause an *interior* pattern. An *internal* cause of disease (such as Liver-Fire) causes an *interior* pattern, by definition.

With regard to fever, we should not confuse a fever from an *external* cause with an *exterior* fever: an *external* cause may cause an *exterior* fever initially, and later, if the pathogenic factor is not expelled, it will cause an *interior* fever.

1. FEELING OF COLD

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 82

There are four degrees of 'cold feeling' which apply both to interior and exterior conditions. In ascending order of severity with their clinical significance, these are:

- 'aversion to wind' (*Wu Feng*, literally 'loathing or disliking wind')
- 'fear of cold' (*Wei Han*)
- 'aversion to cold' (*Wu Han*, literally 'loathing or disliking cold')
- 'shivers' (*Han Zhan*).

The symptoms of feeling cold should be clearly differentiated between interior and exterior patterns.

Aversion to wind means the patient has goose pimples, dislikes going out in the wind and wants to stay indoors.

Fear of cold means the patient feels quite cold, wants to stay indoors, close to a source of heat, and wants to cover up.

Aversion to cold means the patient feels very cold, wants to stay indoors and likes to wrap up in bed with many blankets.

Shivers means that the patient feels extremely cold, shivers and wants to be covered up in bed under a heap of blankets.

The discussion of feeling of cold will be articulated in three parts:

- Feeling of cold in interior conditions
- Feeling of cold in exterior conditions
- How to distinguish between external and internal causes of feeling of cold

a) Feeling of cold in interior conditions

In internal diseases, questions about feeling cold serve to establish the Cold nature of the presenting patterns. Cold may be Full or Empty, and whether it is Full or Empty, it manifests with a feeling of cold.

If a person feels easily cold and experiences cold limbs, this clearly indicates either Full Cold or Empty Cold deriving from Yang deficiency. In patients with chronic diseases, Empty Cold is more common than Full Cold.

Full Cold is characterized by an intense feeling of cold and shivers; the body also feels cold to the touch. Various parts of the body may feel particularly cold depending on the location of the Cold. If it is in the Stomach, the limbs and epigastrium feel cold; if in the Intestines, the legs and lower abdomen are cold; and if in the Uterus, the lower abdomen feels cold. Full Cold usually has a sudden onset and may last only a few months at the most because Cold will inevitably injure Yang and lead to Yang deficiency and therefore Empty Cold.

CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF FULL COLD

- Intense feeling of cold and shivers
- Body feels noticeably cold and relatively hard to touch
- Pain
- Full pulse
- Sudden onset

Yang deficiency of any organ may cause a cold feeling and/or cold limbs; it could be due especially to a deficiency of Yang of the Heart, Lungs, Spleen, Kidneys and Stomach. The cold feeling is both subjective and objective – that is, the patient feels easily and frequently cold and his or her limbs or other parts of the body will feel cold to the touch.

A deficiency of Yang of the Lungs and/or Heart will manifest especially with cold hands (Fig. 43.2), a deficiency of Spleen-Yang with cold limbs and abdomen

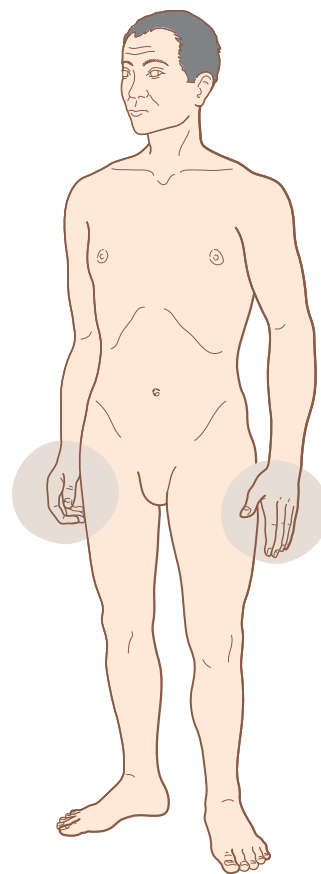


Figure 43.2. Lung- and Heart-Yang deficiency.

(Fig. 43.3) and that of Kidney-Yang especially with cold legs, knees, feet and back (Fig. 43.4). A deficiency of Stomach-Yang will manifest with cold epigastrium and cold limbs in a manner similar to Spleen-Yang deficiency (see Fig. 43.3).

CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF EMPTY COLD

- Mild, persistent cold feeling or tendency to feeling cold
- Body feels mildly cold to touch
- No pain
- Weak pulse
- Slow, gradual onset

There are, however, other causes of cold limbs (as opposed to a general cold feeling). One is Qi stagnation; when Qi stagnates it may fail to reach the hands and feet and these become cold (Fig. 43.5). This is called the 'four rebellious syndrome' in which the 'four rebellious' indicate cold hands and feet; the famous formula Si Ni

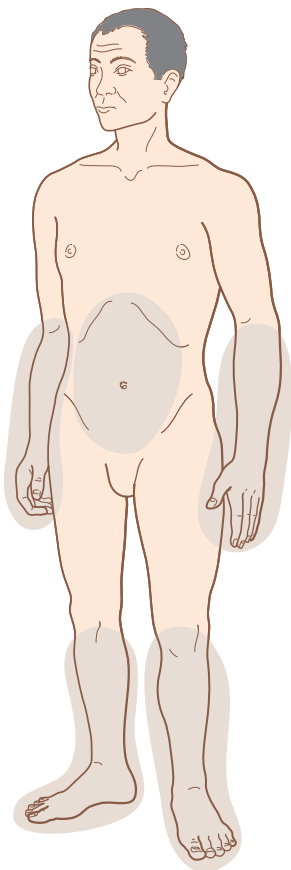


Figure 43.3. Spleen-Yang deficiency.

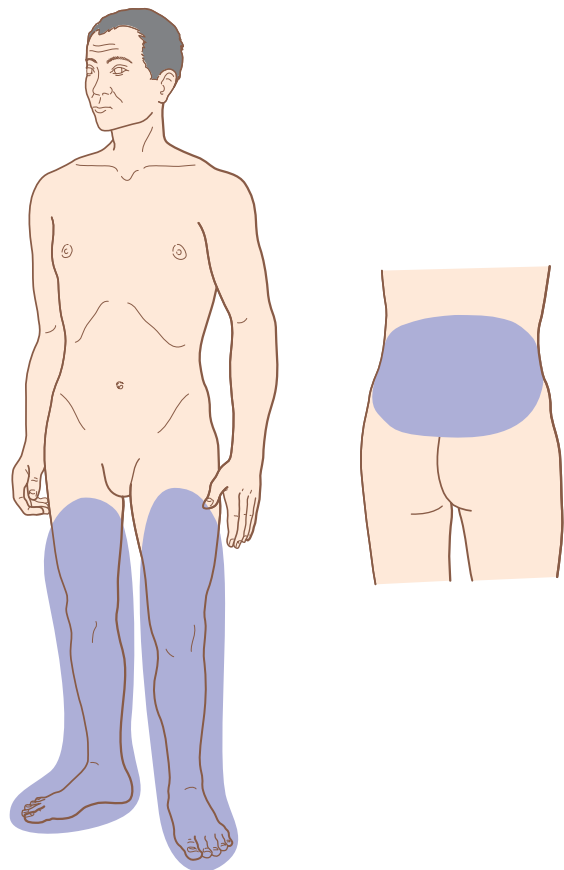


Figure 43.4. Kidney-Yang deficiency.

San Four Rebellious Powder is used for this pattern. An important difference if the cold limbs are due to Yang deficiency or Qi stagnation is that in the former case the whole limb will be cold whereas in the latter case only the hands and feet, and especially the fingers, are cold.

Besides this, cold limbs may derive in women from Blood deficiency due to the deficient Blood not reaching the extremities. In cases of Heart-Blood deficiency only the hands and chest will be cold (Fig. 43.6), whereas in cases of Liver-Blood deficiency the feet will be cold (Fig. 43.7).

We should bear in mind that, even if a patient feels cold in general, he or she may have a feeling of heat in a specific part of the body, such as the face, and we should therefore always remember to ask about specific parts of the body after we have asked about the general feeling. A very common example of this, especially in

women, is a general cold feeling with occasional episodes of feeling hot in the face.



When a patient feels cold in general, remember to ask whether he or she feels hot in any particular part of the body.

To summarize, a cold feeling and cold limbs may be due to:

- Yang Deficiency of Heart and/or Lungs: cold hands, sweaty hands
- Spleen-Yang/Stomach-Yang deficiency: cold limbs and abdomen
- Kidney-Yang deficiency: cold legs, knees, feet, back
- Qi stagnation: cold hands and feet, and especially the fingers
- Heart-Blood deficiency: cold hands and chest
- Liver-Blood deficiency: cold feet.

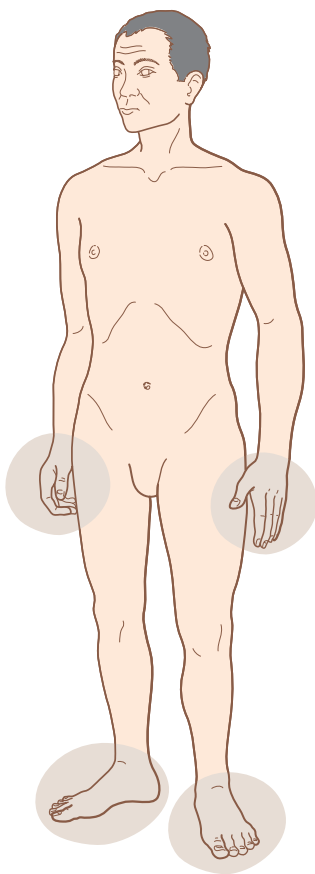


Figure 43.5. Cold hands and feet from Qi stagnation.



TREATMENT

Yang Deficiency of Heart and/or Lungs: LU-9 Taiyuan, HE-5 Tongli, BL-13 Feishu, BL-15 Xinshu.
 Spleen-Yang/Stomach-Yang deficiency: Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, ST-36 Zusanli.
 Kidney-Yang deficiency: BL-23 Shenshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi.
 Qi stagnation: LIV-3 Taichong.
 Heart-Blood deficiency: HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Juque.
 Liver-Blood deficiency: LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

b) Feeling of cold in exterior conditions

i) External invasions

In external invasions, a feeling of cold or shivers serves to establish whether the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior or in the Interior. In fact, when the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior, the patient feels cold, shivers

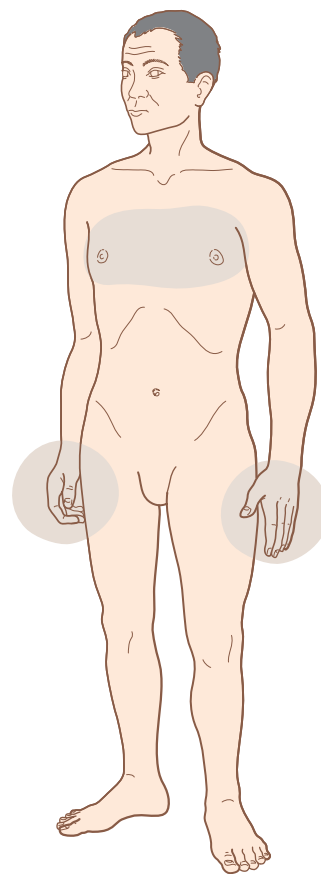


Figure 43.6. Heart-Blood deficiency.

and dislikes the idea of going out (often referred to as 'aversion to cold'). The cold feeling may or may not be accompanied by an actual fever, but it will be associated with heat in the skin; that is, the patient feels cold and shivers, but his or her skin feels hot to the touch.

The areas usually touched to gauge this are the dorsum of the hands and the forehead. It should be stressed that the feelings of cold and fever (or body feeling hot to the touch) are *simultaneous* and not alternating; thus, if a patient feels cold in the morning without a fever and without body feeling hot to the touch and has a fever in the evening, this would correspond to the Lesser-Yang syndrome and would *not* constitute the beginning stage of an invasion of Wind. [Figure 43.8](#) differentiates the manifestations of cold feeling in exterior and interior conditions.

In exterior syndromes, the presence of a cold feeling and shivering is a determining factor in diagnosing that the pathogenic factor is still on the Exterior and that

the pattern is therefore an Exterior one. As soon as the cold feeling disappears and the patient feels hot, this is a certain sign that the pathogenic factor is in the Interior and it has transformed into Heat. One can see these signs very clearly in small children; when the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior, the child will tend to go to bed and cover himself or herself with lots of blankets. As the pathogenic factor enters the Interior (usually changing into Heat), the child throws the blankets off.

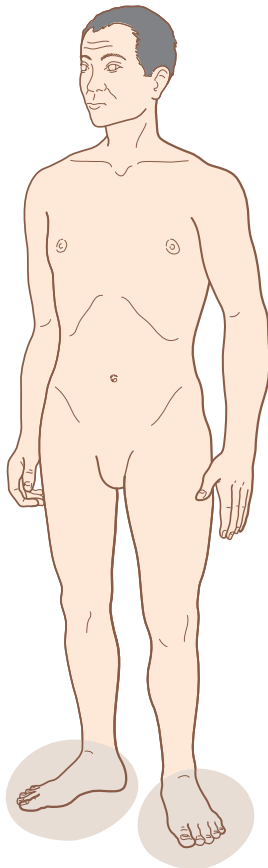


Figure 43.7. Liver-Blood deficiency.

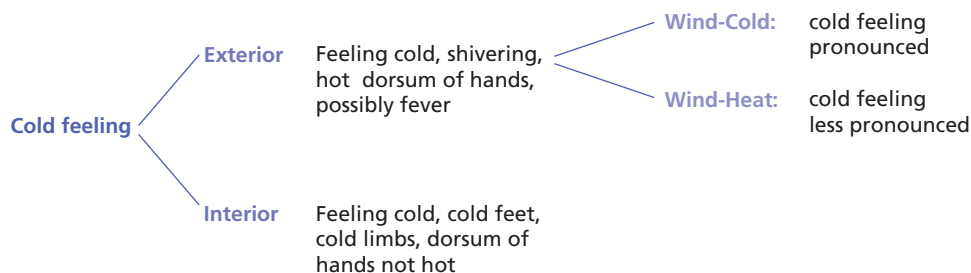


Figure 43.8. Cold feeling in exterior and interior conditions.

INTERIOR VERSUS EXTERIOR PATHOGENIC FACTOR

- Pathogenic factor on the Exterior: feeling of cold, shivers, dislike of going out, possibly a fever; patient is hot to the touch (especially forehead and dorsum of the hand)
- Pathogenic factor in the Interior: cold feeling disappears, patient feels *only* hot

ii) Wind-Cold versus Wind-Heat

In exterior patterns, both Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat cause a cold feeling and shivering; it is a common misconception that this is not the case with Wind-Heat. Since the cold feeling is caused by the obstruction of Defensive Qi by Wind (whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat) in the space between skin and muscles, the cold feeling and shivering is also present in invasions of Wind-Heat, albeit to a lesser degree than in Wind-Cold. This will be explained in greater detail below.

c) How to distinguish between external and internal causes of feeling of cold

The distinction between a cold feeling from an invasion of external Wind and a cold feeling from internal Cold (which may be Full or Empty) is fairly easy as the accompanying symptoms are quite obvious. During an external invasion with the pathogenic factor still on the Exterior, the patient feels cold, dislikes the idea of going out, shivers, may have a fever and the dorsum of the hand feels hot; in addition, there will be sneezing, cough, nasal discharge, sore throat, headache, body aches and a Floating pulse.

When the patient suffers from interior Cold, there are none of the above symptoms. Another distinction between a cold feeling in exterior syndromes and one in interior syndromes is that in the former case the cold feeling is *not* alleviated by covering oneself, while in the

Table 43.1 Differentiation between External and Internal Cold

External Invasion of Cold	Internal Cold
Feels cold, shivers, dislikes going out, fever, sneezing, cough, sore throat, nasal discharge	Feels cold, none of the symptoms associated with an external invasion is present
Cold feeling not alleviated by wrapping up in clothes and blankets	Cold feeling <i>is</i> alleviated by wrapping up warm

latter case, it is. In fact, if a patient feels cold and shivers from an invasion of exterior Wind, he or she will want to go to bed and cover up with blankets, but this will not alleviate the cold feeling and shivering. If a patient suffers from internal Cold, this will be alleviated by covering. Table 43.1 summarizes the differentiation between External and Internal Cold.

i) Differentiation of pathology of a feeling of cold from external or internal causes

The pathogenesis of cold feeling in exterior patterns and interior patterns is different. In exterior patterns, the cold feeling is due to the fact that the external Wind obstructs the space between skin and muscles where the Defensive Qi circulates. As Defensive-Qi warms the muscles, its obstruction by Wind causes the patient to feel cold and shiver (even if the pathogenic factor is Wind-Heat). Thus, Defensive-Qi is not necessarily weak but only obstructed in the space between skin and muscles.

In interior patterns, the cold feeling is usually due to either a Yang deficiency and a failure of Yang Qi to warm the muscles and limbs (in case of Empty Cold) or Cold obstructing the flow of Yang Qi to the muscles and limbs (in case of Full Cold).

2. SIMULTANEOUS FEELING OF COLD AND FEVER IN EXTERIOR CONDITIONS

First of all, we should define 'fever'. 'Fever' does not indicate an actual raised temperature (as measured by a thermometer) but an objective emanation of heat from the patient's body felt on palpation (especially on the

**Figure 43.9.** Simultaneous feeling of cold and fever.

forehead and dorsum of hands). This is discussed more in detail below.

A simultaneous feeling of cold and fever indicates the invasion of an exterior pathogenic factor and that this factor is still at the exterior level. The simultaneous presence of a cold feeling and/or shivers with a fever usually indicates an acute invasion of Wind and denotes that the pathogenic factor is still on the Exterior; as long as there is a feeling of cold the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior. The clinical situations when the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior are described in the Greater-Yang pattern within the Six Stages from the 'Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases' (*Shang Han Lun*) and the Defensive-Qi Level within the Four Levels described by the school of Warm Diseases (*Wen Bing*) of the Qing dynasty. As mentioned above, it is important to stress that the feeling of cold and fever (or body feeling hot to the touch) are *simultaneous* and not alternating (Fig. 43.9).

Although it is the *simultaneous* occurrence of cold feeling and fever that defines an exterior pattern due to invasion of exterior Wind, I shall discuss the pathology of cold feeling and fever in more detail separately.

The aetiology and pathology of Wind-Heat can be used as a blueprint to explain the aetiology and pathology of Summer-Heat, Damp-Heat and Dry-Heat.

The pathogenic factors discussed are:

- Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat
- Summer-Heat
- Damp-Heat
- Dry Heat.

Before discussing the above pathogenic factors, we should first discuss the pathology and clinical manifestation of 'feeling of cold' and 'fever'.

Cold feeling ('aversion to cold') in exterior patterns

In exterior patterns, the cold feeling is due to the fact that the external Wind obstructs the space between the skin and muscles (called *Cou Li*) where the Defensive-Qi circulates. As Defensive-Qi warms the muscles, its obstruction by Wind causes the patient to feel cold and shiver (even if Wind is associated with Heat). Thus, Defensive-Qi is not necessarily weak but only *obstructed* in the space between skin and muscles.

Thus, in exterior patterns, both Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat cause a feeling of cold and possibly shivering; it is a common misconception that this is not the case with Wind-Heat. Since the cold feeling is caused by the obstruction of Defensive-Qi by Wind (whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat) in the space between the skin and muscles, the cold feeling and shivering are also present in invasions of Wind-Heat, albeit to a lesser degree than in Wind-Cold.

As mentioned above, there are four different degrees of 'cold feeling' in exterior conditions. In ascending order of severity, these are:

- 'aversion to wind' (*Wu Feng*, literally 'loathing or disliking wind')
- 'fear of cold' (*Wei Han*)
- 'aversion to cold' (*Wu Han*, literally 'loathing or disliking cold')
- 'shivers' (*Han Zhan*).

The clinical significance of these four degrees of feeling of cold in the context of exterior invasions has been described above.

Thus, generally speaking, there are three aspects to the 'cold feeling' in invasions of exterior Wind: the patient feels cold or has 'waves' of shivers and is reluctant to go out and wants to stay indoors near sources of heat. Except in mild cases, the cold feeling is not relieved by covering oneself.

In conclusion, a feeling of cold in exterior invasions is due to the obstruction of Defensive-Qi in the space between skin and muscles and indicates that the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior: as soon as the feeling of cold goes, the pathogenic factor is in the Interior.

Fever in exterior patterns

As for 'fever' it is important to understand that the Chinese term *Fa Re* does not necessarily indicate what we mean by fever. 'Fever' is a sign in modern Western medicine, not in old Chinese medicine. In old China,

there were obviously no thermometers and the symptom *Fa Re* described in the old texts does not necessarily mean that the patient has an actual fever. It literally means 'emitting burning heat' and indicates that the patient's body feels hot and, in severe cases, almost burning to the touch; the areas touched are usually the forehead and especially the dorsum of the hands (as opposed to the palms, which tend to reflect more Empty Heat).

In fact, it is a characteristic of *Fa Re* (so-called fever) in the exterior stage of invasions of Wind that the dorsum of the hands feels hot compared with the palms and the upper back feels hot compared with the chest.¹ This objective hot feeling of the patient's body may or may not be accompanied by an actual fever. Indeed, in fevers of internal origin, there even may be cases in which the patient has an actual low-grade fever and the body feels cold to the touch.

Thus, it is important to remember that in the context of exterior conditions from invasions of Wind, 'fever' indicates the *objective* hot feeling of the patient's body (with or without an actual raised body temperature) and *not* a feeling of heat; in fact, as described above, the patient feels cold.



'Fever' does not necessarily indicate a raised temperature; it indicates that the patient's forehead and dorsum of hands feel hot to the touch. The patient may or may not have an actual fever.

Simultaneous fever and feeling of cold

When the symptom of shivers and feeling cold occurs simultaneously with the objective sign of the patient's body feeling hot to the touch (or having an actual fever), it indicates an acute invasion of external Wind and denotes that the pathogenic factor is still on the Exterior. In particular, it is the symptoms of shivering and feeling cold that indicate that the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior. The moment the patient does not feel cold any longer but feels hot and, if in bed, throws off the blankets, it means the pathogenic factor is in the Interior and has turned into Heat.

Pathology of fever

The fever, or hot feeling of the body in external invasions of Wind, is due to the struggle between the body's Qi (Upright Qi) and the external pathogenic factor. Thus, the strength of the fever (or hot feeling of the body) reflects the intensity of this struggle; this depends on

the relative strength of the external pathogenic factor and the strength of the Upright Qi. The stronger the external pathogenic factor, the higher is the fever (or hot feeling of the body); likewise, the stronger the Upright Qi, the higher is the fever (or hot feeling of the body). Thus, the fever will be highest when both the external pathogenic factor and the Upright Qi are strong.

The relative strength of the pathogenic factor and the Upright Qi is only one factor which determines the intensity of the fever (or hot feeling of the body). Another factor is simply the constitution of a person: a person with a Yang constitution (i.e. with predominance of Yang) will be more prone to a higher fever (or hot feeling of the body).



The intensity of fever in exterior conditions is related to the struggle between the Upright Qi and the external pathogenic factor and has nothing to do with whether the pathogenic factor is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

Degrees of fever

Thus, there are three possible degrees of fever (or hot feeling of the body):

- Strong pathogenic factor and strong Upright Qi: high fever (or hot feeling of the body)
- Strong pathogenic factor with weak Upright Qi or vice versa: medium fever (or hot feeling of the body)
- Weak pathogenic factor and weak Upright Qi: low fever (or hot feeling of the body) or no fever

a) Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat

i) Factors determining the development of Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat

The constitution of a person is the main factor which determines whether a person who falls prey to an invasion of Wind develops Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat. Were it not so, in cold, Northern countries nobody should fall prey to invasions of Wind-Heat, which is not the case. This is also the reason why, in children, invasions of Wind-Heat are far more prevalent than Wind-Cold, because children are naturally Yang in nature compared with adults. There are, however, also new artificial factors which may predispose a person to invasions of Wind-Heat when succumbing to Wind: very dry, centrally heated places, hot working conditions (e.g. cooks, metal workers), etc.

Table 43.2 Differentiation between Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat manifestations

		Wind-Cold	Wind-Heat
Pathology		Wind-cold obstructing the space between skin and muscles	Wind-Heat obstructing the space between skin and muscles and impairing the descending of Lung-Qi
Symptoms and signs	Fever	Slight	High
	Shivers	Pronounced	Slight
	Aches	Pronounced	Slight
	Thirst	No	Yes
	Urine	Clear	Slightly dark
	Headache	Occipital	Deep inside, severe
	Sweating	If sweating, in top part, head	Slight sweating
	Sore throat	Itchy throat	Very sore throat
Tongue	No change	Slightly red on the sides and/or front	
Pulse	Floating-Tight	Floating-Rapid	
Treatment		Pungent-warm herbs to cause sweating	Pungent-cool herbs to release the Exterior

ii) Clinical manifestations of Wind-Heat and Wind-Cold

Although a fever is more likely to occur in invasions of Wind-Heat, the differentiation between Wind-Heat and Wind-Cold is not made on the basis of the intensity of aversion to cold and fever (or a hot feeling of the body). Other factors, such as the tongue, and other symptoms help differentiate between Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat. This is illustrated in [Table 43.2](#).

iii) Wind-Cold: differentiation between 'Attack of Wind' and 'Attack of Cold'

So far we have talked about Wind-Cold in general, but the 'Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases' differentiates between two types of Wind-Cold invasions: one with prevalence of Wind, called 'Attack of Wind', and the other with prevalence of Cold, called 'Attack of Cold'. The Attack of Wind is described in Clause 2 of the 'Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases': 'The Greater-Yang pattern with fever, sweating, aversion to wind and a Floating and Slowed-down pulse is called Attack of Wind'.² It may seem strange that the pulse is Slowed-down in this pattern as Wind is a Yang pathogenic factor that moves

Table 43.3 Differentiation between Attack of Cold and Attack of Wind in Wind-Cold

	Wind-Cold– Attack of Cold	Wind-Cold–Attack of Wind
Common manifestations	Aversion to cold, occipital stiffness, Floating pulse	
Other symptoms	Pronounced aversion to cold, body aches, no sweating, pulse Floating-Tight	Aversion to wind, fever, slight sweating, pulse Floating-Slow
Treatment	Release the Exterior by causing sweating (Ma Huang Tang)	Release the Exterior by adjusting the space between skin and muscles and regulating Defensive Qi and Nutritive-Qi (Gui Zhi Tang)

and opens. However, it is also true that Wind may cause stiffness (as in occipital stiffness in Wind-Cold invasions), rigidity and paralysis; thus, it is quite possible for the Attack of Wind of external Wind-Cold to cause a Slowed-down pulse (which is less slow than the Slow pulse). The commentary to Clause 2 confirms that *Huan* in this case means a ‘moderate and slow (*Chi*) pulse.’³

Clause 3 describes the Attack of Cold: ‘*The Greater-Yang pattern with fever or no fever, aversion to cold, body aches, retching and Tight pulse on both Yin and Yang, is called Attack of Cold.*’⁴

In Attack of Wind, the patient’s Nutritive-Qi is more deficient than in the Attack of Cold and this causes a slight sweating. The other symptoms are tabulated in Table 43.3.

Apart from Wind-Heat and Wind-Cold, simultaneous shivers and fever may also occur with invasions of Summer-Heat, Damp-Heat and Dry-Heat.

b) Summer-Heat

Summer-Heat is a type of Wind-Heat which therefore manifests with a simultaneous feeling of cold and fever. The clinical manifestations usually are fever (or hot feeling of the body), shivers, no sweating, headache, a feeling of heaviness, an uncomfortable sensation in the epigastrium, irritability, thirst, tongue Red in the front or sides with a white-sticky coating, Soggy and Rapid pulse.

The tongue coating is white because the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior.

c) Damp-Heat

Damp-Heat from external origin also manifests with a simultaneous feeling of cold and fever at its very beginning stages. The clinical manifestations usually are fever that is worse in the afternoon, body hot to touch, aversion to cold, shivers, swollen glands, headache, a feeling of heaviness, a feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, sticky-white tongue coating and Soggy-Slow pulse.

The pulse is Slow because of the obstructive influence of Dampness. The tongue coating is white because the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior.

d) Dry-Heat

Dry-Heat is a type of Wind-Heat which therefore manifests with a simultaneous feeling of cold and fever. The clinical manifestations usually are fever; slight aversion to cold; shivers; slight sweating; dry skin, nose, mouth and throat; dry cough; sore throat; Dry tongue with thin-white coating; and Floating-Rapid pulse.

The tongue coating is white because the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior.

3. ALTERNATING FEELING OF COLD AND FEELING OF HEAT

Alternating feeling of cold and feeling of heat (or fever) should not be confused with the *simultaneous* feeling of cold and fever which characterizes invasions of external Wind. There are two main differences. First, in alternating feeling of cold and feeling of heat, the feeling of heat is a subjective feeling of the patient, whereas in the simultaneous aversion to cold and fever of external invasions, the feeling of heat is an objective feeling of heat of the forehead and hands of the patient on palpation. Second, in alternating feeling of cold and feeling of heat, the cold and hot sensations are alternating, whereas in aversion to cold and fever, they are simultaneous.

Alternating feeling of cold and feeling of heat occurs also in external invasions, but only those affecting the Lesser Yang channels (whereas aversion to cold and fever occurs in external patterns affecting the Greater Yang channels). This symptom is a chief symptom of the Lesser Yang pattern within the Six Stages or of the Gall-Bladder Heat pattern within the Four Levels. The latter is also a Lesser Yang-type of pattern but with the prevalence

of heat rather than cold. This is reflected in the patient's sensations in that the feeling of heat is predominant over the feeling of cold.



- 'Feeling of heat' in alternating cold and hot feeling is subjective.
- 'Feeling of heat' (or fever) in simultaneous aversion to cold and fever is objective; that is, the patient's body feels hot to the touch.

Case History

An 18-year-old girl complained of an acute illness manifesting with alternation of shivers and feeling of heat, swollen glands, sore throat, headache, lethargy and a feeling of heaviness of the head. These symptoms began 3 weeks before the consultation. Her tongue was Red with red points in the front with a thin-yellow coating. Her pulse was Floating in general, especially on the Front positions and slightly Slippery on the right side.

Diagnosis

This is a very clear case of acute invasion of Wind-Damp-Heat still at the exterior level at the time of consultation. It is still at the exterior level because she still experiences shivers. Together with the typical symptoms of Wind-Heat, there is also acute, exterior Dampness manifesting with swollen glands, a feeling of heaviness of the head and the Slippery quality on the right side of the pulse.

4. FEELING OF HEAT FROM INTERNAL CAUSES

A subjective feeling of heat may be caused by Full Heat or Empty Heat of any organ. In Full Heat, the feeling of heat is somewhat more intense than in Empty Heat. Another difference is that in Empty Heat, the feeling of heat tends to be more marked in the afternoon or evening. In addition, Empty Heat is characterized by a feeling of heat, especially in the Yin areas of the body and particularly in the chest, palms and soles. Of course, the differentiation between Full Heat and Empty Heat is done on the basis of other manifestations such as thirst, complexion and, most of all, tongue, which will be Red with a coating in Full Heat and Red without coating in Empty Heat. The main differentiating

Table 43.4 Differentiation between Full Heat and Empty Heat

Full Heat	Empty Heat
• Usually a more intense heat • Generalized over the body or in the face • Not related to time of day • Intense thirst • Pronounced irritability • Complexion red all over • Red tongue, thick-dry-yellow coating • Overflowing-Rapid pulse	• Less intense heat • Often on chest, soles and palms • Worse in the afternoon and evening • Dry mouth with desire to sip drinks • Vague anxiety • Redness on the cheek bones • Red tongue without coating • Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse

manifestations of Full Heat and Empty Heat are shown in [Table 43.4](#).

With Full Heat, the organs that are most often involved are the Liver, Heart, Stomach and Lungs; with Empty Heat, the organs that are most often involved are the Kidneys, Heart, Stomach and Lungs.

We should bear in mind that, in some cases, a person may feel hot in general but simultaneously experience cold feet, for example. Therefore, when a patient replies affirmatively to the question '*Do you have a tendency to feel hot in general?*', our questioning should not stop there; rather it should continue in order to ascertain whether there is any cold feeling in any particular parts of the body. For a discussion on the clinical significance of simultaneous (and contradictory) hot and cold feelings in internal conditions, see below.



When a patient feels hot in general, remember to ask about any possible cold feeling in a particular part of the body (and vice versa).

5. INTERNAL FEVER

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 82](#)

By 'fever' is meant the situation when the patient has a fever but no simultaneous cold feeling/shivers; thus, we are now discussing interior fevers, which, it should be remembered, may be of external or internal origin. An internal fever of external origin is one caused by an exterior pathogenic factor (such as Wind-Heat, Wind-Cold or Damp-Heat) which has penetrated into the

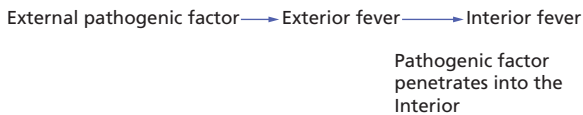


Figure 43.10. Relationship between external pathogenic factor and interior fever.

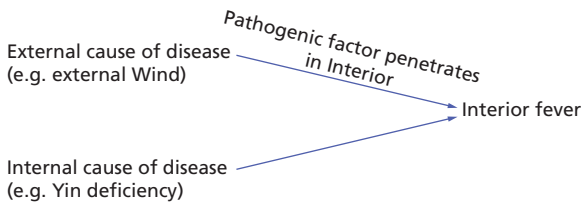


Figure 43.11. External and internal causes of interior fevers.

interior and caused a fever; an internal fever of internal origin stems from an internal disharmony such as interior Heat, Yin deficiency, Qi-Blood deficiency and Blood stasis (Figs. 43.10 and 43.11).

In some of the patterns discussed, there may not be an actual fever but only a feeling of heat; the pathology and pathogenesis of internal fever or feeling of heat is the same. Generally speaking, acute fevers are characterized by an actual fever, that is, raised body temperature, whereas chronic ‘fevers’ may be characterized simply by a feeling of heat without a rise in body temperature. Thus, contrary to the situation in exterior syndromes when ‘fever’ indicates an objective hot feeling of the body, in chronic interior syndromes with fever of internal origin, ‘fever’ may indicate a subjective feeling of heat.

There are three degrees of fever (or hot body sensation):

- Slight fever (*Wei Re*) indicates that the fever is very low and the body is only slightly hot; the patient may not be aware of having a fever.
- Fever (*Fa Re*) indicates that the body temperature is raised (or the body feels quite hot to the touch); the patient is aware of the fever and has a feeling of heat.
- Strong fever (*Zhuang Re*) indicates that the fever is very high and the body is very hot to the touch; the patient has an intense feeling of heat and throws off bedclothes.

When discussing fevers of internal origin, it is important to differentiate between acute and chronic fever.

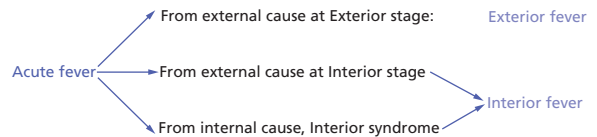


Figure 43.12. Origin of acute fevers.

a) Acute Fever

Acute internal fevers usually develop from the acute stage of an invasion of external Wind: both Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat may lead to an internal fever. Thus, the fever discussed here is primarily an acute fever deriving from external causes but at the interior stage. In such acute fevers the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels provides the best framework of interpretation and is clinically more relevant than the Identification of Patterns according to the Six Stages. However, there may be other acute internal fevers of internal origin, for example, from Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder (febrile episode of cholecystitis) and Damp-Heat in the Bladder (cystitis with fever) (Fig. 43.12).

The Four Levels

Within the Four Levels, the Defensive-Qi level is the only Exterior one and therefore there is simultaneous fever and shivering with a cold feeling. At the other three levels (Qi, Nutritive Qi and Blood), Heat is in the Interior and the fever is interior. The Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels describes the symptomatology of invasions of Wind-Heat. However, fever, to a lesser degree, also may be present in invasions of Wind-Cold, for which the Identification of Patterns according to the Six Stages is used.

The three interior levels, Qi, Nutritive-Qi and Blood levels, within the Four Levels represent three different depths of penetration of the Heat, the Qi being the most superficial (or rather least deep) and Blood the deepest. At the Qi level, the Upright Qi is still strong and engages in a fight with the pathogenic factors, leading to a high fever and acute, strong manifestations characterized by restlessness, high fever, profuse sweating, etc. At the Nutritive-Qi and Blood levels, the Upright Qi is injured, the Heat has injured the fluids and there is Yin deficiency. These levels are usually characterized by a fever at night and by the Mind being affected, causing delirium, severe mental restlessness and, in severe cases, coma. At the Blood level, internal Wind can develop and bleeding occurs. Also at the Blood level and, to a lesser extent, at the Nutritive-Qi level, there are maculae.

The tongue is an important and objective sign to differentiate the Qi level from the Nutritive-Qi level and the Blood levels; at the Qi level the tongue is Red and has a thick coating, while at the Nutritive-Qi and Blood levels the tongue is dark-Red and has no coating.

THE FOUR LEVELS IN A NUTSHELL

Defensive-Qi level: fever, aversion to cold
 Qi level: fever, feeling of heat, thirst
 Nutritive-Qi level: fever at night, mental confusion, maculae
 Blood level: fever at night, mental confusion, maculae, bleeding

The clinical manifestations of the Defensive-Qi level, which causes a simultaneous feeling of cold and fever, have been discussed above. The clinical manifestations of the main patterns appearing at the Qi, Nutritive-Qi and Blood levels are described below.

Heat in the Lungs (Qi level)

Clinical manifestations

Fever, cough with yellow sputum, sweating, thirst, a feeling of oppression or pain of the chest, Red tongue with yellow-sticky coating, Rapid-Overflowing pulse.

This is one of the patterns appearing at the Qi level within the Four Levels. It is characterized by acute, interior Lung-Heat. From a Western perspective, it could correspond to acute bronchitis, pneumonia or pleurisy. In this case there is an actual fever as well as an objective hot feeling of the patient's body.

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs (Qi level)

Clinical manifestations

Fever, cough with abundant sticky-yellow sputum, thirst, sweating, a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Rapid-Slippery pulse.

This is one of the possible patterns appearing at the Qi level within the Four Levels; it is characterized by acute, interior Lung-Heat with Phlegm.

Heat in Bright Yang–Channel pattern

Clinical manifestations

Fever, sweating, intense thirst, Big or Overflowing pulse, Red tongue with yellow coating.

This corresponds to acute, interior Heat in the Stomach channel, and its manifestations are described

by the Stomach-Heat level within the Four Levels or the Bright-Yang Channel Pattern within the Six Stages. This pattern is often summarized in a nutshell as the 'four big', that is, high fever, intense thirst, profuse sweating and Overflowing or Big pulse.

Heat in Bright Yang–Organ pattern

Clinical manifestations

Fever, abdominal pain and fullness, dry stools, constipation, thirst, Red tongue with a thick-dry yellow, brown or black coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

This is the Dry-Heat in the Intestines level within the Four Levels and is the same as the Bright-Yang–Organ Pattern within the Six Stages.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Intestines

Clinical manifestations

Fever, thirst with no desire to drink, loose stools, abdominal pain, a feeling of heaviness, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

This is Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Intestines level within the Four Levels.

Heat at Nutritive-Qi Level

Clinical manifestations

Fever at night, thirst, dry mouth with no desire to drink, mental restlessness, delirium, aphasia, coma, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

This is Heat at the Nutritive-Qi level within the Four Levels.

Heat at Blood Level

Clinical manifestations

Fever at night, thirst, mental restlessness, bleeding, seizures, tremor, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

This is Heat at the Blood level within the Four Levels.

In addition to the above interior patterns with internal fever of the Four Levels, two common patterns from interior Heat which may give rise to an acute, Internal fever are Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver (as in acute cholecystitis) and Damp-Heat in the Bladder (as in acute cystitis).

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver

Clinical manifestations

Fever, bitter and sticky taste, hypochondrial pain which may extend to the right shoulder and scapula, irritability,

a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, vomiting, dark urine, tongue with Red sides and sticky-yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Clinical manifestations

Fever, burning of urination, difficult urination, scanty-dark urine, blood in the urine, mental restlessness, sticky-yellow tongue coating on the root of the tongue, Slippy-Rapid pulse.

b) Chronic fever

Chronic internal fevers may be due to a Deficiency or an Excess. Yin deficiency is a common and obvious cause of chronic internal fever, but Qi and Blood deficiency also may cause it. Among the Full causes of internal fever are Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat and Blood stasis. Thus, there are five main causes of chronic internal fever:

- i) Empty Heat from Yin deficiency
- ii) Qi deficiency
- iii) Blood deficiency
- iv) Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat
- v) Blood stasis

i) Empty Heat from Yin deficiency

Clinical manifestations

Low-grade fever or feeling of heat in the afternoon or evening, five-palm heat, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, dry mouth and throat at night, mental restlessness, night-sweating, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, dry stools, dark-scanty urination, a thin red line on the inside of the lower eyelid, Red tongue without coating and with cracks, Fine-Rapid pulse.

These are the general symptoms of Empty Heat deriving from Yin deficiency; they may arise from the Lungs, Heart, Stomach, Spleen, Liver and Kidneys. Other accompanying symptoms (or more accentuated symptoms) according to the organ involved are:

- Lungs: dry throat, dry cough, malar flush
- Heart: insomnia, mental restlessness, dream-disturbed sleep, malar flush, red tip of the tongue
- Spleen: dry lips, dry stools
- Liver: dry eyes, red eyes, dream-disturbed sleep, red sides of the tongue
- Kidneys: dizziness, tinnitus
- Stomach: dry mouth, bleeding gums.

ii) Qi deficiency

Clinical manifestations

Low-grade fever or feeling of heat aggravated by overwork, dizziness, tiredness, depression, muscular weakness and spontaneous sweating, shortness of breath, loose stools, poor appetite, weak voice, Pale tongue, Weak or Empty pulse.

This fever is caused by a severe deficiency of Qi, usually of the Spleen, Stomach and Lungs and a deficiency of the Original Qi. This situation was described by Li Dong Yuan in the famous classic 'Discussion on Stomach and Spleen' (*Pi Wei Lun*). He said that overwork and irregular diet weaken Qi of the Stomach and Spleen and the Original Qi which resides in the Lower Field of Elixir (*Dan Tian*); here it shares a place with the physiological Minister Fire. If the Minister Fire is stirred by overwork and emotional problems, it becomes pathological, it 'displaces' the Original Qi in the Lower Field of Elixir and rises upwards causing a low-grade fever or feeling of heat (Fig. 43.13).

Li Dong Yuan called this pathological Minister Fire a 'thief' of the Original Qi: the Heat generated by the pathological Minister Fire is called 'Yin-Fire' and is neither Full nor Empty Heat, although it is more similar to the latter. Li Dong Yuan said that this Yin-Fire is not treated by clearing it with bitter-cold herbs but by

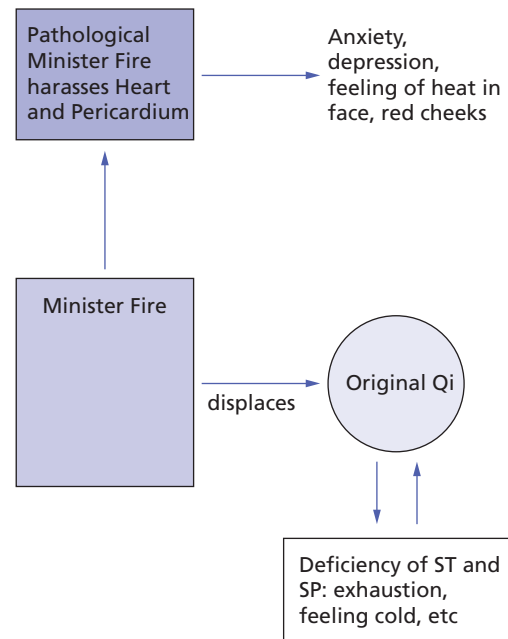


Figure 43.13. Pathology of Yin-Fire.

tonifying the Original Qi with sweet-warm herbs; as the Minister Fire and the Original Qi share the same place, tonifying the Original Qi will automatically displace and subdue the pathological Minister Fire.

The representative prescription to subdue Yin-Fire is *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction* within which *Ren Shen Radix Ginseng* tonifies the Original Qi.

This condition of Yin-Fire and feeling of heat deriving from Qi and Blood deficiency is very common today and frequently seen in cases of chronic fatigue syndrome and other modern autoimmune diseases, such as lupus or rheumatoid arthritis.

iii) Blood deficiency

Clinical manifestations

Low-grade fever or feeling of heat in the afternoon, dizziness, tingling, blurred vision, poor memory, tiredness, depression, scanty periods, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale-Thin tongue, Fine or Choppy pulse.

This fever is caused by a severe depletion of Blood and by Empty Heat resulting from it; it is more common in women and may occur after childbirth.

iv) Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat

Clinical manifestations

Chronic low-grade fever or feeling of heat that comes and goes according to the emotional state (it comes when the person is upset), volatile mood, irritability, a feeling of oppression and distension of the chest and hypochondrium, dry throat, sighing, a bitter taste, irregular periods, premenstrual tension, Red tongue with redder sides and thin-yellow coating, Rapid-Wiry pulse.

This is due to Liver Heat generated by chronic Liver-Qi stagnation and is usually caused by chronic emotional problems.

v) Blood stasis

Clinical manifestations

Low-grade fever or feeling of heat in the afternoon or evening, dry mouth, abdominal pain, dry skin and nails, dark complexion, purple lips, Purple tongue, Choppy or Firm pulse.

This is chronic Blood stasis and usually related to the Liver. The manifestations of dryness are due not to Yin deficiency but to Blood stasis, due to the interactions and interchange between Blood and Body Fluids; when Blood stagnates for a long time, it cannot interchange

with the Body Fluids and these fail to moisten the body. Fever from chronic Blood stasis is frequently seen in cancer.

6. FIVE-PALM HEAT

This is a feeling of heat in the palms, soles and chest, which is also sometimes called Five-Centre Heat or Five-Heart Heat; this may or may not be accompanied by an actual fever. It is usually accompanied by mental restlessness, night-sweating and insomnia. This is frequently seen in practice; however, it sometimes may manifest only in the soles and palms or palms and chest.

Yin deficiency of any organ may cause five-palm heat: Lungs, Heart, Liver, Spleen, Kidneys, Stomach. However, there are other, less common, possible causes of five-palm heat, including Blood deficiency, Latent Heat in Lesser Yin and Liver-Fire.

In Blood deficiency, five-palm heat is experienced mainly in the afternoon and is accompanied by other symptoms of Blood deficiency. This occurs almost exclusively in women.

Latent Heat in the Lesser Yin is characterized by Heat in the Kidneys and is frequently seen in myalgic encephalomyelitis (post-viral fatigue syndrome). The main manifestations are a low-grade fever or feeling of heat in the afternoon or evening, feeling cold in the morning, dizziness, tinnitus, and night sweating.

Liver-Fire also may cause five-palm heat although not frequently; this symptom will be accompanied by other manifestations of Liver-Fire.

FIVE-PALM HEAT

- Yin deficiency of any organ (this is the most common pattern)
- Blood deficiency: more common in women and occurs more frequently in the afternoon
- Latent Heat in the Lesser Yin: occurs more frequently in the evening with low-grade fever
- Liver-Fire: severe five-palm heat with a sudden onset (not common)

7. CONTRADICTORY FEELINGS OF COLD AND HEAT IN INTERNAL CONDITIONS

Contradictory hot and cold feelings are very common, especially in women and especially after 40. This is due to four possible causes:

- a) Simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang
- b) Blood deficiency with Empty Heat
- c) Disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel
- d) Yin Fire

a) Simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang

A simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang is very common in women over 40; indeed, it is probably more the norm than the exception. Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang have a common root, and, especially after 40, a deficiency of one often involves also a deficiency of the other, albeit in different degrees. Thus, when there is a deficiency of both Kidney-Yang and Kidney-Yin, with a predominance of the latter, there will be dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, malar flush, five-palm heat and a feeling of heat, but possibly also cold feet; when there is a predominance of Kidney-Yang deficiency there will be dizziness, backache, tinnitus, frequent urination, a pronounced feeling of cold, and cold feet, but possibly also a feeling of heat in the afternoon.

b) Blood deficiency

Blood deficiency may cause some Empty-Heat and therefore contradictory hot and cold symptoms. In fact, Blood deficiency may cause cold hands, but when Empty Heat arises from it in chronic cases there may be a feeling of heat in the face.

c) Disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel

Contradictory hot and cold symptoms may be caused by a disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel. When this vessel is deficient (which involves a Kidney deficiency), a deficiency of Qi in its descending branch may cause cold feet and the ascending rebellious Qi may cause a feeling of heat in the face.

d) Yin Fire

Finally, Yin Fire may cause a person to feel cold in general and experience occasional feeling of heat in the face. The pathology of Yin Fire has already been explained above.

CONTRADICTIONARY FEELING OF COLD AND FEELING OF HEAT

- Simultaneous deficiency of both Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang
- Blood deficiency with Empty Heat
- Disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel with rebellious Qi
- Yin Fire



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Why, when and how we ask about feeling of cold, heat or fever.
- The feeling and causes of cold in interior or exterior conditions.
- The simultaneous feeling of cold and fever in exterior conditions and in comparison to alternating feelings of cold and heat.
- The feeling of heat from internal causes.
- The Four Levels patterns in acute fever: Defensive-Qi, Qi, Nutritive Qi and Blood level.
- The patterns underlying chronic fever; five-palm heat.
- The commonly felt contradictory feelings of cold and heat in internal conditions in women over 40.

END NOTES

1. Deng Tie Tao, Practical Chinese Diagnosis (*Shi Yong Zhong Yi Zhen Duan Xue* 实用中医诊断学), Shanghai Science Publishing House, Shanghai, 1988, p. 90.
2. Shang Han Lun Research Group of the Nanjing College of Chinese Medicine, An Explanation of the "Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases" (*Shang Han Lun Yi Shi* 伤寒论译释), Shanghai Science Publishing House, Shanghai, 1980, p. 351.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 354.

44

Mental-Emotional Symptoms

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask**When we ask****How we ask****Depression***Definition of depression**Diagnosis of depression**Depression in Chinese medicine**Patterns in depression***Fear/anxiety****Irritability/anger****Worry****Sadness and grief****Excess joy****Mental restlessness****WHY we ask**

The area of questioning surrounding the emotions experienced by the patient is one of the most important, if not *the* most important, area. Emotional causes of disease play a very prominent role in the aetiology and clinical manifestations of most of our patients. Therefore, we should always ask patients about their emotional life. However, some patients may regard an enquiry about their emotional life as an intrusion and we should be sensitive about this.

The emotional state of the patient reflects of course the state of his or her Mind and Spirit, and the findings from interrogation need to be carefully integrated with those gleaned from observation, particularly observation of the lustre (*Shen*) of the eyes. In addition, the state of the patient's Mind and Spirit is an important prognostic factor.

WHEN we ask

Enquiry about a patient's emotional life must be closely integrated with observation (especially of the eyes,

complexion and tongue), with palpation (of the pulse) and with hearing (voice).

If the emotional condition is not the presenting problem, I generally ask about a patient's emotional life towards the end of the consultation to try to find the cause of the disease. In many cases, the emotional state of the patient is the main presenting problem; for example, patients may come to us because they are depressed or anxious. In other cases, the emotional state of the patient is the underlying cause of physical symptoms; for example, a patient may complain of tiredness and digestive symptoms when frustration and resentment may be the cause of the condition.

Unless the patient comes specifically seeking help for an emotional state such as depression or anxiety, I generally ask about the patient's emotions when the pattern emerging from the interrogation, together with observation of the eyes and tongue and palpation of the pulse, strongly points to an emotional cause of disease. For example, if the Lung pulse is somewhat full and the patient looks sad, I may try to find out whether he or she has experienced sadness or grief which has not been expressed (the fullness of the Lung pulse would indicate this).

If the Heart pulse is Overflowing and there is a Heart crack on the tongue, I may enquire whether he or she has suffered from a shock. If the Lung pulse is particularly Weak and without wave and the eyes lack lustre, I may explore whether events in the patient's life have caused sadness or grief.

If the pulse is Wiry on all positions, I ask the patient whether some situation in his or her life is causing frustration, anger or resentment. If the Heart pulse is Choppy, the complexion dull, the eyes lustreless and the voice weak and weepy, I try to determine whether the patient is sad.

On the basis of what I find from observation, palpation and hearing, I generally ask a patient to confirm the presence of emotional problems. This is important to

engage the patient more with the treatment; and, by making the patient aware of a possible emotional cause of the symptoms, it may further the healing process.

It is important to be sensitive when asking about the emotional state of the patient (if this is not the presenting problem). Often, observation gives us a clue about the emotional state of the patient, in which case I would ask the patient about it. For example, a patient may come in complaining of tiredness and premenstrual breast distension; if the patient's eyes lack lustre, I would suspect emotional stress to be the cause of the problem and I would circumspectly ask the patient about it.

It is important to mention, however, that in most cases of treating emotional symptoms, or symptoms which are caused by emotional problems, observation should take precedence over what a patient verbally reports. It is most often when we see beyond what a patient is telling us that we find the true cause of a disease.

HOW we ask

As mentioned above, we must use great sensitivity when asking patients about their emotions.

First of all, we should ask only if they appear willing to talk about their emotions and respect their wish if they do not want to do so. If I suspect that emotional stress is the cause of a problem I ask questions like *'Have you suffered any shock in the past?'*, *'Do you tend to feel irritable about some situation?'* or *'Do you sometimes feel sad?'*, etc.

Of course, if the patient comes to us specifically for an emotional condition, the questioning is conducted differently as the patient will openly volunteer the information.

The emotional states discussed are:

1. Depression
2. Fear/anxiety
3. Irritability/anger
4. Worry
5. Sadness and grief
6. Excess joy
7. Mental restlessness

1. DEPRESSION

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 79](#)

Depression is a very common symptom in Western patients, even though some patients may not admit to

being depressed and others may not even recognize they are depressed.

a) Definition of depression

'Depression' is a modern Western term which indicates a change in mood ranging from a very mild feeling of despondency to the most abject depression and despair. In mild depression the change in mood varies and is not permanent, whereas in severe depression the change in mood is fixed and persists over a period of months or years.

Severe depression is also accompanied by characteristic changes in behaviour, attitude, thinking efficiency and physiological functioning. Of course, a temporary feeling of depression following adverse life events such as bereavement is normal. In distinguishing a normal reaction from pathological depression a quantitative judgement has to be made. If the precipitant seems inadequate, or the depression appears too severe or too long-lasting, the condition may be regarded as abnormal. In addition, the severity and incapacity in depressive illness differ qualitatively as well as quantitatively from depressed feelings which are part of normal experiences.

Depression is twice as common in women as in men, and its onset increases towards middle age. The main symptoms of depression are depressed mood, loss of interest, loss of self-esteem or motivation, fatigue, anxiety, insomnia and loss of appetite. In very severe cases, the patient never comes out of an extremely depressed mood, is unable to experience any pleasure at any time, is in utter despair and may be suicidal. A major depressive syndrome has the following characteristics:

- very depressed mood most of the day nearly every day
- markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all or almost all activities most of the day, nearly every day
- significant weight loss (or gain), decrease (or increase) in appetite
- insomnia or sleepiness
- psychomotor agitation or retardation every day
- fatigue nearly every day
- feelings of worthlessness or guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being ill)
- diminished ability to think or concentrate, indecisiveness nearly every day

- recurrent thoughts of death, recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide.

In addition to the above manifestations, a major depressive syndrome is defined by the absence of the following: an organic factor, a normal reaction to bereavement, delusions or hallucinations in the absence of mood symptoms, schizophrenia, delusional disorder and psychotic disorder.¹

b) Diagnosis of depression

Asking patients about feelings of depression should always be part of our questions about the patient's emotional state and should be done with sensitivity and tact. In fact, some patients will not want to admit to being depressed, some will admit to being depressed but do not necessarily want to talk about it, and others may not even realize they are in a state of depression. These patients often will complain only of physical symptoms such as extreme tiredness, lack of motivation and feeling cold, preferring not to face up to the fact that they may be depressed. In China this is more the norm than the exception, as Chinese patients will seldom complain of feeling 'depressed', and somatization of their feelings of depression into bodily symptoms is often seen.

In patients who are not aware of being depressed, Chinese diagnosis often enables us to recognize the true condition of the patient's mental-emotional state. Certain signs that point to mental depression as the root cause of the patient's problems are:

- the complexion
- the eyes
- the tongue
- the voice
- the pulse.

The *complexion* of a severely depressed person will lack lustre and tend to be greyish or greenish, the *eyes* will also lack lustre (*Shen*), the *tongue* will have a Red tip and may have a deep Heart crack and the *voice* will be low and lacking vitality.

The *pulse* in a depressed person varies according to whether the condition is primarily Full or Empty. In Full conditions, the pulse feels very Wiry or Wiry and Slippery, whereas in Empty conditions (especially when sadness and grief prevail) the pulse is Weak or Choppy, often Short and nearly always lacks a 'wave' (Sad pulse).

Interestingly, very often the pulse of a depressed person may point to the true cause of the problem

being repressed anger. In fact, in some cases, a depressed patient may display many signs pointing to an Empty condition (low voice, dull complexion, slow movements) while the pulse is very Wiry; this usually indicates that the patient's depression is due to repressed anger. In contrast, a pulse that is Choppy, Short or Sad indicates that sadness or grief is the prevalent emotion at the root of the depression.

c) Depression in Chinese medicine

In Chinese medicine, mental depression was called *Yin Yu*, which means 'gloominess' or 'depression' or, *Yu Zheng*, which means 'depression pattern'. *Yu* has the double meaning of 'depression' and 'stagnation', which implies that according to this theory, mental depression is always caused by a stagnation.

In fact, the 'Simple Questions' in [Chapter 71](#) mentions the Five Stagnations of Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water.² The 'Essential Method of Dan Xi' (*Dan Xi Xin Fa*, 1347) describes six stagnations of Qi, Blood, Dampness, Phlegm, Heat and Food. It says: '*When Qi and Blood are harmonized, no disease arises. If they stagnate diseases arise. Many diseases are due to stagnation ... stagnation makes things accumulate so that they cannot flow freely, they would like to rise but cannot, they would like to descend but cannot, they would like to transform but cannot ... thus the 6 Stagnations come into being.*'³

The 'Complete Book of Jing Yue' (*Jing Yue Quan Shu* 1624) gives stagnation an emotional interpretation and talks about Six Stagnations of anger, pensiveness, worry, sadness, shock and fear. This confirms that all emotions can lead to stagnation of Qi. He said: '*In the 6 Stagnations, stagnation is the cause of the disease. In emotional stagnation, the disease [i.e. the emotion] is the cause of the stagnation.*'⁴

d) Patterns in depression

Chinese books normally ascribe mental depression to Liver-Qi stagnation in its various manifestations, including Liver-Qi stagnation turning into Heat and Liver-Qi stagnation with Phlegm. In the later stages of mental depression, Empty patterns appear. Thus, although in Chinese medicine stagnation and depression are almost synonymous, Empty patterns also may cause depression.

In severe depression, the Liver is always involved due to its housing the Ethereal Soul. The Ethereal Soul is responsible for our life's dreams, plans, ideas, projects,

relationship with other people, etc. The Ethereal Soul was often described as 'the coming and going of the Mind (*Shen*)'; this means that the Ethereal Soul assists the Mind in giving it the capacity to have dreams, plans, ideas, projects, etc. In this sense, the Ethereal Soul gives the Mind 'movement', projection towards the outside and ability to form relationships with other people, hence its 'coming and going', as described above. On the other hand, the Mind guides and controls the Ethereal Soul and, most of all, integrates the activity of the Ethereal Soul within the overall psychic life of the person.

Thus, if the 'movement' of the Ethereal Soul is lacking (either through its lack of activity or the over-control of the Mind), the person is depressed; if the 'movement' of the Ethereal Soul is excessive (either through its overactivity or lack of control by the Mind), the person may display manic behaviour (bearing in mind that the latter may vary in intensity and seriousness from full-blown bipolar disease to much less severe manifestations that are relatively common also in mentally healthy individuals).

When a person is severely depressed, the Ethereal Soul is not 'coming and going' enough, and therefore the person lacks dreams, has lost faith in the future, does not know which direction to take in life and has a feeling of loss, isolation and separation. From this point of view, many Liver (and other organs) patterns, and not just Liver-Qi stagnation, may cause depression. When the Ethereal Soul 'comes and goes' too much, the person may develop manic behaviour; in this case, the person has lots of dreams, projects and ideas but nothing comes to fruition because of the chaotic state of the Ethereal Soul and the lack of control of this by the Mind.

Figure 44.1 illustrates the two states of the Ethereal Soul: when it 'comes and goes' too much and when it does not 'come and go' enough.

Essential to the proper movement of the Ethereal Soul is its restraint by the Mind. The Mind (*Shen* of the Heart) needs to restrain the Ethereal Soul (but not too much) and integrate the material coming from it into the totality of the psyche. If the Mind controls and restrains the Ethereal Soul too much, depression ensues; if the Mind fails to control and restrain the Ethereal Soul, manic behaviours may result (Fig. 44.2).

The lack of 'movement' of the Ethereal Soul and hence depression may be due to pathogenic factors inhibiting the Ethereal Soul, such as Liver-Qi stagnation, or to a deficiency of the Liver, Spleen or Kidneys not stimulating the Ethereal Soul. The excessive movement

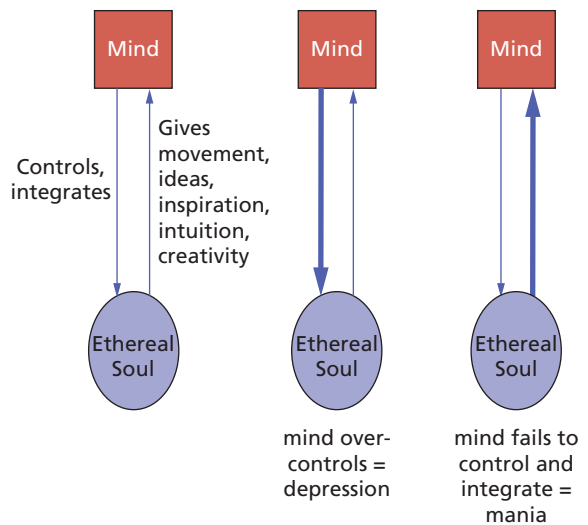


Figure 44.1. The 'coming and going' of the Ethereal Soul.

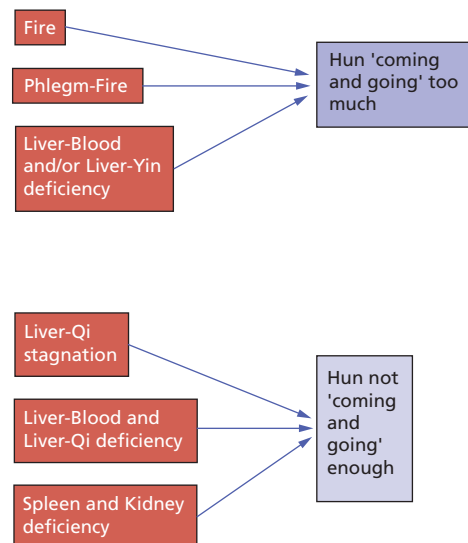


Figure 44.2. Relationship between Mind and Ethereal Soul.

of the Ethereal Soul and hence manic behaviour may be due to pathogenic factors over-stimulating the Ethereal Soul, such as Fire or Phlegm-Fire, or to the lack of anchoring of this Soul from a deficiency of Liver-Blood and/or Liver-Yin. Note that Liver-Blood deficiency may lead to lack of movement of the Ethereal Soul when it is combined with Liver-Qi deficiency (itself associated with deficiency of Gall-Bladder Qi); otherwise, deficient Liver-Blood fails to house the Ethereal Soul, which leads to excessive movement.

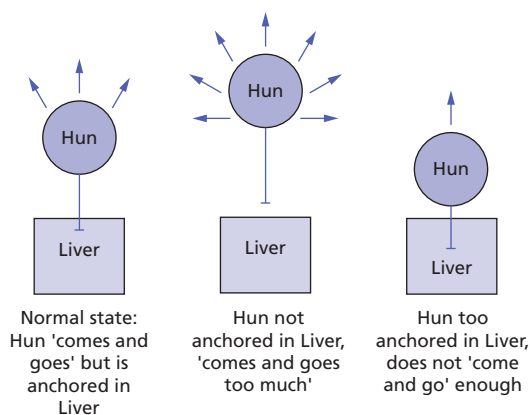


Figure 44.3. Patterns leading to excessive and deficient movement of the Ethereal Soul.

'MOVEMENT' OF THE ETHEREAL SOUL

Lack of movement of the Ethereal Soul

- Liver-Qi stagnation
- Liver-Blood and Liver-Qi deficiency
- Spleen and Kidney deficiency

Excessive movement of the Ethereal Soul

- Fire
- Phlegm-Fire
- Liver-Blood and/or Liver-Yin deficiency

Figure 44.3 illustrates the patterns leading to excessive and deficient movement of the Ethereal Soul.

When diagnosing the prevailing patterns in depressed patients, it is important to differentiate between Full and Empty conditions: as the mood of depressed patients is the same in both cases, the main differentiating signs are the pulse and the tongue. In Full conditions causing depression, the pulse is usually Wiry or Slippery and Wiry, whereas in Empty conditions it is Choppy, Short or Sad. As depression is often accompanied by anxiety, this is obviously more pronounced in Full than in Empty conditions.

The main Full patterns accompanying depression are:

- Liver-Qi stagnation
- Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat
- Liver-Qi stagnation with Qi-Phlegm
- Phlegm-Fire harassing the Mind
- Blood stasis
- Gall-Bladder Heat.

The main Empty patterns accompanying depression are:

- Spleen- and Heart-Blood deficiency
- Heart-Yang deficiency
- Liver-Blood deficiency
- Kidney- and Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
- Kidney-Yang deficiency.

For a detailed description of these patterns, see Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 79](#) on Mental-Emotional Problems.

DEPRESSION

- Liver-Qi stagnation: depression, moodiness, irritability
- Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat: depression, irritability, Red tongue
- Liver-Qi stagnation with Qi-Phlegm: depression, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat
- Phlegm-Fire harassing the Mind: depression, anxiety, agitation, expectoration of phlegm, Swollen tongue
- Heart-Blood stasis: depression, agitation, Purple tongue
- Gall-Bladder Heat: depression, irritability, bitter taste, hypochondrial fullness
- Diaphragm Heat: depression, anxiety, feeling of stuffiness in the chest following an invasion of Wind-Heat
- Spleen- and Heart-Blood deficiency: depression, insomnia, palpitations, tiredness
- Heart-Yang deficiency: depression, palpitations, cold hands
- Liver-Blood deficiency: depression, lack of sense of direction, sadness
- Kidney- and Heart-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty Heat: depression, anxiety, night-sweating, palpitations, Red tongue without coating
- Kidney-Yang deficiency: depression, lack of motivation, lack of will-power, feeling cold, frequent urination.

2. FEAR/ANXIETY

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 79](#)

A chronic feeling of anxiety (occurring on its own without depression) is very common in Western patients. A feeling of anxiety includes emotional states akin to the emotions of fear and worry (two of the seven emotions) in Chinese medicine. It may be accompanied or caused by a Deficiency (usually of Blood or Yin), by an Excess (usually of Heat) or by a combination of Deficiency and Excess (usually Yin deficiency with Empty Heat).

When there is a deficiency of Blood or Yin, the Mind and Ethereal Soul lose their 'residence' in Heart-Blood and Liver-Blood, respectively, and the person becomes anxious and sleeps badly. Conversely, pathogenic factors such as Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Heat or Phlegm-Heat

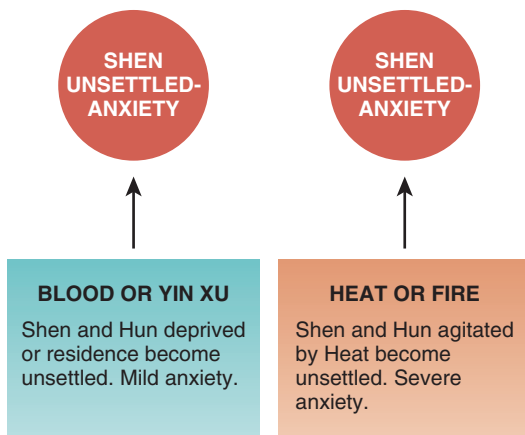


Figure 44.4. Two causes of anxiety.

PATTERNS IN ANXIETY

Empty

- Deficiency of Blood
- Deficiency of Yin

Full

- Heat

Full/empty

- Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

may 'agitate' the Mind and Ethereal Soul and lead to anxiety and insomnia. In some cases, of course, the Mind and Ethereal Soul are restless from both a deficiency (e.g. Yin deficiency) and a pathogenic factor (e.g. Empty Heat). [Figure 44.4](#) illustrates graphically the two causes of anxiety – that is, a Deficiency leading to the Mind not being 'anchored' or a pathogenic factor 'agitating' the Mind.

As a general rule, the degree of anxiety or fear depends on whether it is caused by an Empty or a Full condition: in Empty conditions it is mild, whereas in Full conditions it is severe.

It is usually easy to see if patients are anxious: they look restless; their voice may be quivering; they may fidget, talk a lot (in the case of a Full condition) or be very quiet (in the case of an Empty condition); and they may be very anxious about receiving acupuncture. In a few cases, however, a state of anxiety may not be apparent in patients who make a brave attempt to hide their true state. In fact, those who are in a constant state of fear may initially appear to be calm and grounded. In these cases, the tongue, pulse and eyes

may reveal the patient's state of anxiety or fear. The tongue may have a Red tip, often with a deep Heart crack, the pulse may be Wiry (in case of a Full condition) or Floating-Empty (in case of an Empty condition) and Rapid and the eyes may look 'unstable' and lack control.

For a detailed description of the patterns accompanying anxiety and fear, see Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 79](#) on 'Mental and Emotional Problems'.

FEAR/ANXIETY

Empty

- Heart-Blood deficiency: mild anxiety, insomnia, palpitations
- Heart-Yin deficiency: anxiety that is worse in the evening, palpitations, night-sweating
- Liver-Blood deficiency: mild anxiety, depression, insomnia
- Liver-Yin deficiency: mild anxiety, depression, insomnia, tongue without coating
- Kidney-Yin deficiency: anxiety that is worse in the evening, lack of will-power, dizziness, tinnitus
- Deficiency of Qi of the Heart and Gall-Bladder: mild anxiety, insomnia, timidity

Full

- Heart-Fire: severe anxiety, palpitations, Red tongue with coating
- Heart-Blood stasis: severe anxiety, palpitations, Purple tongue
- Phlegm-Fire harassing the Mind: severe anxiety, manic behaviour, Swollen tongue
- Liver-Qi stagnation: anxiety, depression, irritability, hypochondrial distension
- Liver-Fire: severe anxiety, headache, thirst, Red tongue, Wiry pulse
- Liver-Yang rising: anxiety, headache, dizziness
- Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel: anxiety, panicky feeling, feeling of constriction of the throat, palpitations, tightness of the chest, abdominal fullness, Firm pulse.
- Diaphragm-Heat: anxiety and feeling of stuffiness in the region under the heart following an invasion of Wind-Heat

Full/Empty

- Kidney- and Heart-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty Heat: anxiety that is worse in the evening: dizziness, tinnitus, palpitations
- Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: anxiety that is worse in the evening, palpitations, Red tongue without coating

Case History

A 39-year-old woman had been suffering from panic attacks for the past 6 years. During the attacks her throat would become tense and she felt as if she was unable

to swallow, became slightly breathless, had palpitations and felt hot. They occurred every day and became worse after eating lunch. It was interesting to note that when the patient was describing the attacks, she repeatedly mentioned the word 'throat'.

The patient also mentioned that she suffered from night-sweats. Her periods were not problematic, but she did become aggressive premenstrually.

The tongue body was Swollen, slightly without coating on the root and very slightly Red on the sides and tip. Her pulse was very Weak in the left-Rear position and Overflowing in the left-Front position.

Diagnosis

The panic attacks are caused by rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel. The clinical manifestations displayed by this patient are fairly typical of the Penetrating Vessel's pathology of Qi rebelling upwards along its pathway. The Penetrating Vessel flows up through the abdomen and chest, along the line of the Kidney channel and flowing through the Heart on its way up to the throat and face. Therefore, it influences the Heart and chest area and, in this case, is causing the symptoms of palpitations and breathlessness. The symptoms associated with the syndrome of Qi rebelling upwards in the Penetrating Vessel were called *Li Ji*, which literally means 'internal urgency', and indicate a state of anxiety and panic, as in this case (Fig. 44.5).

The tension in the throat and difficulty in swallowing are caused by the Qi of the Penetrating Vessel rebelling upwards. The feeling of heat is caused by the Qi of the Penetrating Vessel rushing up to the face; this is reflected in the Overflowing quality of the pulse on the left-Front position and the Weak quality on the left-Rear position. This pulse reflects clearly the deficiency of the Penetrating Vessel in the Lower Burner and the subsequent rushing upwards of the rebellious Qi to the face. It should be remembered that the pulse positions reflect not only the organs but also the areas of the body and their respective channels; in this case there is an Emptiness below (the lower abdomen) and a Fullness above (throat and face), making the pulse Weak in the third position and Overflowing in the first.

However, in this case, the pulse is also reflecting a pathology of the relevant organs. The Weak pulse on the left-Rear position indicates a Kidney deficiency, predominantly of Kidney-Yin, as evidenced by the peeling of the root of the tongue and the night-sweating. The Overflowing quality on the left-Front

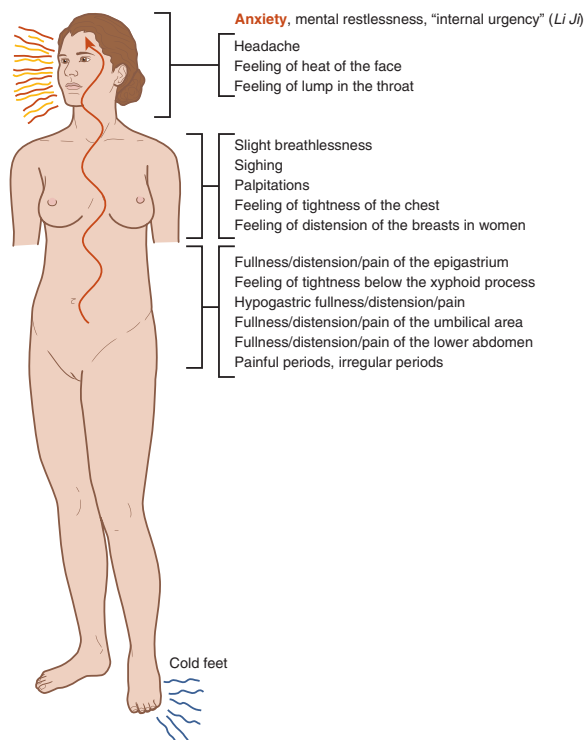


Figure 44.5. Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel.

position indicates Heart-Heat which is evidenced also by the Red tip of the tongue.

The swelling of the tongue indicates the presence of Phlegm, but she has no symptoms of this at present. Such cases highlight the preventive value of tongue diagnosis, and I would therefore resolve Phlegm even in the absence of symptoms.

The fact that when describing her symptoms the patient repeatedly and emphatically said the word 'throat' may indicate that the origin of her condition is an emotional one and that she had felt unable to express herself, leading to a feeling of restriction in the throat area.

3. IRRITABILITY/ANGER

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 79

Irritability is a common emotional complaint. It includes feeling irritable frequently, flying off the handle easily, feeling frustrated, and similar emotional states. Of the traditional seven emotions, irritability is akin to 'anger'

but encompasses a broader range of emotional states and is generally not so intense. A propensity to anger is generally due to Liver patterns, whereas irritability may be caused by many different patterns affecting most organs.

In particular, the patterns that may cause irritability include:

- Qi stagnation
- Blood stasis
- Liver-Yang rising
- Blood deficiency
- Yin deficiency (with or without Empty Heat)
- Heat (including Damp Heat)
- Empty Heat.

Therefore, irritability may be due to Full or Empty causes; in general the irritability from Empty causes is mild and somewhat vague, whereas that due to Full causes is more intense. The interrogation, therefore, should first try to establish the Full or Empty character of the irritability. In Empty conditions, the patient may say *'I get easily annoyed'*, or *'Things that did not use to get to me, now do'*, etc. In Full conditions, the patient may say something like *'I feel always irritable'*, *'I feel so on edge that I take it out on my children'*, etc.

Below, I link examples of patterns that may cause irritability and examples of patients' expressions:

- Liver-Qi stagnation: *'I feel extremely irritable before my periods and take it out on my family.'*
- Lung-Qi stagnation: *'I feel this lump in the throat, I am on edge and feel like bursting into tears.'*
- Liver-Blood stasis: *'I seethe with resentment.'*
- Heart-Blood stasis: *'My mind is constantly judging and I feel resentful.'*
- Liver-Yang rising: *'I fly off the handle easily.'*
- Liver-Fire: *'I explode into a rage.'*
- Heart-Fire: *'I feel irritable, impatient and angry.'*
- Lung-Heat: *'I feel frustrated, weepy and irritable.'*
- Stomach-Heat: *'I often feel angry and obsessive.'*
- Liver-Blood deficiency: *'I feel lost, overwhelmed and on edge and I can't cope.'*
- Kidney-Yin deficiency: *'I feel helpless, unmotivated and on edge in the evening.'*
- Heart-Blood deficiency: *'I feel sad and on edge and I can't cope.'*
- Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: *'I feel hot and bothered.'*
- Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: *'I feel sad and hot and bothered.'*
- Damp-Heat: *'I feel heavy, yucky and irritable.'*

4. WORRY

Many patients complain of a propensity to worry and over-thinking (pensiveness), and, even if it is not the presenting condition, many people profess to it when asked. The emotion of worry is related to the Lungs, and over-thinking (pensiveness) is more related to the Spleen.

Worry describes a condition in which the patient is prone to imagining the worst possible outcome in a certain situation; for example, a mother imagines that her son has been in an accident when he is late arriving home.

Over-thinking describes a state in which the patient is unable to empty the mind of repetitive thoughts, which may be of a relatively trivial nature. Molehills may become mountains in their minds when an apparently insignificant issue develops into a cause of great concern.

A propensity to worry and overthinking is most commonly caused by, and may in turn cause, an Empty condition. A deficiency of Spleen-Qi and/or-Blood is the most commonly seen pattern leading to worry and over-thinking. However, Heart- and/or Liver-Blood deficiency also may lead to excessive worrying.

There are also situations in which over-thinking is caused by a mixed or Full condition, namely stagnation of Lung-Qi or Yin deficiency and Empty Heat. Worry from a Full condition is usually more intense and consuming than that from an Empty condition, which a patient may describe as being more lurking in the background.

5. SADNESS AND GRIEF

'Sadness', which pertains to the Lungs, must be distinguished from a 'lack of joy', which pertains to the Heart. Sadness is an emotional state that weakens the Lungs and usually manifests with Lung-related symptoms such as a pale complexion and a weepy and weak voice. Lack of joy, on the other hand, is not an actual emotional state but a certain lack of vitality deriving from Heart deficiency; this manifests not with a sad demeanour, but with a flatness and lack of 'fire'.

A patient may report a feeling of sadness or may be unaware of it. A full or empty quality on the Lung pulse is usually the most reliable indication of whether sadness is involved in a presenting condition. I find that a full Lung pulse often indicates sadness which has been held

WORRY/OVER-THINKING

- Heart- and Spleen-Qi deficiency: worry, slightly obsessive thinking, slight depression, over-thinking, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.
- Lung-Qi deficiency: worry, depression, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.
- Lung-Qi stagnation: worry, mild irritability, depression, a feeling of a lump in the throat, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the Right-Front position.
- Heart-Blood deficiency: worry, depression, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.
- Liver-Blood deficiency: worry which increases after the period in women, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.
- Heart-Yin deficiency: worry, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.
- Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: worry, especially in the evening, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

on to for a long time by the patient, who may be totally unaware of its presence. When the Lung pulse is Weak or Empty, I find the patient more likely to report feeling sad.

Sadness depletes Lung- and Heart-Qi. However, with time, the deficiency of Qi in the chest also may give rise to some stagnation of Qi in the chest. This stagnation is associated with the Lungs and Heart and not the Liver. It manifests with a slight feeling of tightness of the chest, experiencing the sadness in the chest, sighing and slight palpitations.

The most likely Empty patterns giving rise to sadness are a deficiency of Lung-Qi or Liver and/or Heart-Blood; when sadness is due to an Empty condition it is often accompanied by frequent crying. Sadness from Liver-Blood deficiency is more common in women and becomes worse after the period or after childbirth. Sadness with a feeling of lump in the throat may be due to Lung-Qi stagnation.

Grief is akin to sadness and usually derives from loss, separation or bereavement. Like sadness, it depletes Lung- and Heart-Qi, but with time it also may give rise to some stagnation of Qi in the chest, causing symptoms similar to the ones mentioned above for sadness.

SADNESS

- Lung- and Heart-Qi deficiency: sadness, crying, depression, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.
- Liver-Blood deficiency: sadness, crying, mental confusion, aimlessness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.
- Heart-Blood deficiency: sadness, crying, depression, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.
- Lung-Qi stagnation: sadness, mild irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the Right-Front position.

Case History

A 57-year-old woman presented with the main complaint of pain in the chest. As she was speaking, I observed that her eyes were quite lustreless and lacking in *Shen*. This always points to an emotional origin of the problem. I asked her how long she had the chest pain, and she replied that it had started after her husband's death a few years before.

Her tongue was Swollen with a red tip, and her pulse was slightly Slippery but very slightly Tight on the Lung position.

Diagnosis

This is a very good example of the effect of grief. The grief from her husband's death had initially caused a deficiency of the Heart and Lungs; with time, this had caused some stagnation of Qi in these two organs. The stagnation of Heart-Qi manifested with a red tip of the tongue, and the stagnation of Qi in both Heart and Lungs caused the chest pain. As this condition was long-standing, the depletion and simultaneous stagnation of Lung-Qi had disrupted the movement and transformation of Qi and fluids, giving rise to some Phlegm in the chest which contributed to the chest pain. The Phlegm was indicated by the swelling of the tongue and the Slippery pulse.

This patient had an interesting emotional reaction to the treatment which is worth reporting. I used a simple treatment needling P-6 Neiguan on one side, LU-7 Lieque on the other, Ren-12 Zhongwan and ST-40 Fenglong. A few days after the treatment she went to the graveyard to visit her husband's grave for the first time since his death and she cried. She had obviously repressed her grief for many years, and this had caused the stagnation of Qi of the Heart and Lungs in the chest. Another emotional reaction a few days after the treatment was that for the first time she experienced

anger at work. This is also interesting as, just as there is a controlling relationship between Wood and Metal, there is one between their allied emotions: anger and sadness/grief. Obviously the release of Qi stagnation in Metal had stopped excessive control of Metal over Wood and led to an explosion of anger. Moreover, each emotion can counteract another across the reverse Controlling (Ke) cycle of the Five Elements: anger (Wood) counteracts sadness (Metal), joy (Fire) counteracts fear (Water), pensiveness (Earth) counteracts anger (Wood), etc.

6. EXCESS JOY

Of course, few patients will report feeling excessively joyful! A normal state of joy is obviously not a cause of disease. Several emotional states are included under the term of 'excess joy'. First, it includes the sudden state of extreme elation deriving from joyful news. This makes Qi rise and expands the Heart. Second, excess joy can be interpreted as a life characterized by excessive excitement and stimulation. Indeed, I would say that 'overstimulation' is the best description of 'excess joy' of Chinese medicine. This also causes Qi to rise and may lead to Heart-Fire. Third, excess joy is seen in certain mental conditions such as hypomania or manic behaviour.

In my experience, the main meaning of 'joy' as an emotional cause of disease in Chinese medicine is excessive stimulation. Intended in this sense, it is a common emotional cause of disease in our society with overstimulation from desire, alcohol, drugs.

A Full pattern of the Heart is most likely to cause excess joy. Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart may cause the most severe cases of excess joy; that seen in mental diseases such as bipolar disorder is a typical example of this. However, Phlegm-Fire does not necessarily *always* cause severe symptoms. It may be seen relatively frequently in milder forms when it causes excessive and inappropriate laughter, bouts of excess joy and hyperactivity. Heart-Fire also may cause a permanently elated mood.



Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart does not always manifest with severe mental symptoms.

Empty Heat of the Heart also may lead to excess joy and a feeling of being driven and not being able to stop.

EXCESS JOY

- Heart-Fire: excess joy, permanently elated mood, excessive laughter, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.
- Heart Empty Heat: excess joy, permanently elated feeling as if being driven, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.
- Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart: excess joy, mental confusion, excessive and inappropriate laughter, mental restlessness, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

7. MENTAL RESTLESSNESS

'Mental restlessness' is a translation of the term *Fan Zao*, which literally means 'vexation and restlessness'. It also includes restless legs. The term *Fan Zao* encompasses two different symptoms: *Fan* (vexation) is due to Full Heat and pertains to the Lungs, and *Zao* (restlessness) is due to Empty Heat and pertains to the Kidneys. *Fan* is Yang and *Zao* is Yin.

A patient is unlikely to use the term 'mental restlessness' but may describe having 'difficulty in concentration', 'not being able to focus on one thing for any length of time' or 'not being able to sit still and do nothing'.

MENTAL RESTLESSNESS

- Yin deficiency with Empty Heat: vague mental restlessness, restless legs, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty, Rapid pulse.
- Phlegm-Heat in the Stomach and Heart: mental restlessness, mental confusion, agitation, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, shouting, depression, manic behaviour, tongue Red in the centre with a sticky-yellow coating and a Stomach/Heart crack with a rough, sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid pulse.
- Heart-Fire: pronounced mental restlessness, agitation, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.
- Lung-Heat: mental restlessness, worry, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Yin-deficiency with Empty Heat may cause a vague feeling of mental restlessness which worsens in the evening, while Phlegm-Heat in the Stomach and/or Heart, or Heart-Fire, will cause a more intense feeling



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- That emotional causes of disease are frequently responsible for the conditions experienced by our patients, and therefore it is fundamental that we ask and when and how we approach the questioning.
- The definition, diagnosis and classic literature interpretation of depression.
- The patterns in depression and the role of the Ethereal Soul (*Hun*) in severe depression.
- The role that the Mind and Ethereal Soul play in fear and anxiety and the signs and symptoms of the patterns.
- The patterns and manifestations of irritability and anger.
- The patterns causing worry and over-thinking and the resultant signs and symptoms.
- The role that the Lungs and Heart play in sadness and grief.
- Excessive joy, which, although rarely seen in our adult patients, is more prevalent in children; and mental restlessness.

which may be accompanied by mental confusion. Mental restlessness also may be caused by Lung-Heat, in which case it will be accompanied by worry and other Lung symptoms such as breathlessness or cough.

END NOTES

1. Jamison K.R. 1993 Touched with Fire: Manic-Depressive Illness and the Artistic Temperament. The Free Press, New York, pp. 261-2.
2. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine-Simple Questions (Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen 黄帝内经素问). People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 492. First published c.100 BC.
3. Cited in Zhang Bo Yu 1986 Internal Medicine (Zhong Yi Nei Ke Xue 中医内科学), Shanghai Science Publishing House, p. 121.
4. Ibid., p. 121.

Sexual Symptoms

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask**When we ask****How we ask****Men***Impotence**Lack of libido**Premature ejaculation**Nocturnal emissions**Tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation***Women***Lack of libido**Headache soon after orgasm*

An enquiry about the sexual life of the patient should always form part of the interrogation. This is not one of the traditional 10 questions from Chinese books, partly for cultural reasons. In fact, starting from the Ming period and especially during the Qing dynasty, Chinese medicine was heavily influenced by the prevalent Confucian morality, which condemned any talk or display of sexuality.

WHY we ask

Questions about sexual symptoms are asked primarily to ascertain the state of the Kidneys. In fact, a Kidney deficiency is at the basis of many sexual symptoms, such as impotence, premature ejaculation and frigidity.

In men, apart from asking about any sexual problems such as impotence, it is important to establish whether any of their symptoms is aggravated by sexual activity or if they feel excessively tired after sexual activity. An aggravation of a symptom after sexual activity always indicates a Qi deficiency, often of the Kidneys. A Kidney deficiency is also indicated if a man feels especially tired after sexual activity and particularly if

the tiredness is accompanied by dizziness, backache, weak knees, etc.

However, it should not be forgotten that other organs play a role in the origin of sexual symptoms and especially the Liver and the Heart. The Heart, in particular, plays an important role in sexual desire and in the achievement of a normal erection in men.

WHEN we ask

I generally ask about sexual symptoms when the patient presents with a clear Kidney- or Heart-deficiency pattern. I also ask about sexual symptoms when the patient is clearly under emotional stress and I suspect this may be due to sexual problems such as impotence in men or failure to achieve an orgasm in women.

HOW we ask

For obvious reasons, the practitioner needs to be particularly tactful when asking about sexual symptoms, especially when the practitioner and patient are of the opposite sex. In some cases, when I feel instinctively that the patient would not appreciate such questions, I do not ask them.

An enquiry about sexual activity in men is important not only for diagnostic reasons but also to be able to advise them about appropriate levels of sexual activities according to Chinese medicine.¹ There are significant differences between the sexual physiology of men and of women that are not often taken into account when advising patients about the desirable frequency of sexual activity; the Chinese caution about 'excessive sexual activity' is more relevant to men than to women.

In fact, the *Tian Gui*, a direct manifestation of Essence (*Jing*), is sperm in men and menstrual blood in women. Quite simply, because men lose sperm but women do not obviously lose menstrual blood during intercourse, sexual activity may potentially be weakening for men (when it is too frequent) but not so much for women.

The sexual problems, and their clinical significance, of men and women will be discussed separately. These are:

1. Men
 - a) Impotence
 - b) Lack of libido
 - c) Premature ejaculation
 - d) Nocturnal emissions
 - e) Tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation
2. Women
 - a) Lack of libido
 - b) Headache soon after orgasm

1. MEN

The sexual symptoms discussed are:

- a) Impotence
- b) Lack of libido
- c) Premature ejaculation
- d) Nocturnal emissions
- e) Tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation

The symptoms and signs related to men's sexual system are discussed in [Chapter 75](#) of Part 5 Symptoms and Signs.

a) Impotence

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 75](#)

Impotence is by far the most common sexual complaint in men, and the first cause that would come to mind would be a Kidney deficiency and especially a Kidney-Yang deficiency. This is a common cause of impotence, especially in older men, in which case it is accompanied by backache, weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus and poor memory.

In young men, however, it is my experience that impotence is often related to a Heart pattern and anxiety. In a few cases, impotence also may be caused by Damp-Heat in the Liver channel.



Impotence in young men is caused frequently by a Heart pattern rather than a Kidney deficiency.



TREATMENT

Erectile dysfunction from Kidney deficiency: BL-23 Shenshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Quxue, KI-3 Taixi.

IMPOTENCE

- Kidney-Yang deficiency: impotence, feeling cold, backache, abundant clear urine.
- Heart-Blood deficiency: impotence, dizziness, palpitations, Choppy pulse.
- Heart-Fire: impotence, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, Rapid-Overflowing pulse.
- Damp-Heat in the Liver channel: impotence, heaviness of the scrotum, urethral discharge, sticky-yellow coating.

b) Lack of libido

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 75](#)

Lack of libido in men is usually related to a deficiency of Qi or Yang, most frequently of the Kidneys. However, other organs may be relevant, and a severe Qi deficiency of such organs as Spleen, Heart or Lungs also may cause lack of libido. In my experience, a deficiency of the Heart is a more common cause of lack of libido than deficiency of the Kidneys. Among Full conditions, Liver-Qi stagnation may also cause lack of libido.

c) Premature ejaculation

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 75](#)

Premature ejaculation is usually related to a Kidney pattern and especially Kidney-Qi not Firm. It also may be due to a Heart pattern such as Heart-Qi or Heart-Blood deficiency.

d) Nocturnal emissions

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 75](#)

'Nocturnal emissions' indicates ejaculation during sleep; this symptom always has 'pride of place' among Kidney-deficiency symptoms in Chinese books. In the West, this symptom is relatively rare and it is not even considered a 'symptom' unless it occurs very frequently, such as once a week or more.

There are cultural reasons why this symptom always has a prominent place among Kidney-deficiency symptoms in Chinese books. In ancient times ejaculation during sleep, especially if with sexual dreams, was considered to be due to the man having intercourse with female ghosts at night; such ghosts were considered very dangerous because they robbed men of their vital Essence.

In general, nocturnal emissions without sexual dreams are due purely to a deficiency (usually of the

Kidneys), whereas nocturnal emissions with sexual dreams are usually due to Heat (which may be Full or Empty), usually of the Heart. Thus, Empty-Heat arising from a Kidney-deficiency may cause nocturnal emissions with dreams; Full-Heat, particularly of the Liver and/or Heart also may cause this symptom.



Nocturnal emissions without dreams are due to a Kidney-Yin deficiency, whereas nocturnal emissions with dreams are due to Heat (Full or Empty).

e) Tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 75

A pronounced feeling of tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation is nearly always due to a deficiency of the Kidneys.

2. WOMEN

The sexual symptoms discussed are:

- a) Lack of libido
- b) Headache soon after orgasm

a) Lack of libido

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 89

Lack of libido or an inability to reach an orgasm in women is usually related to a Kidney or Heart deficiency.

Generally, sexual desire depends on the state of Kidney-Yang and the Minister Fire; a deficient Minister Fire may cause a lack of sexual desire (and, conversely, Fire of the Liver and/or Heart and Empty Heat deriving from Kidney-Yin deficiency may cause an excessive sexual desire).

The Heart plays an important role in sexual arousal and orgasm in women. During sexual arousal, there is an arousal of the (physiological) Minister Fire of the Kidneys which goes up towards the Heart and Pericardium. It is this upward flow of the Minister Fire towards the Heart that causes a flushed face and an increased

heart rate. Thus, a lack of sexual desire is often due to a deficient Minister Fire and therefore Kidney-Yang.

During orgasm, the Minister Fire that was rising during sexual arousal is suddenly discharged downwards; this downward movement of the Minister Fire is controlled by the Heart (whose Qi naturally descends). Hence, an inability to reach an orgasm may be due to a Heart deficiency.

Of course, a woman's inability to reach an orgasm also depends on the man's performance during the sexual act. According to Daoist sexual alchemy, men pertain to Fire and Fire flares up easily and is easily extinguished; women pertain to Water and Water is 'slow to boil and slow to cool down'. It is for this reason that the ancient Daoist sex manuals were aimed primarily at men so they would be skilled in the art of sexual foreplay. Therefore, when considering a woman's inability to reach an orgasm, we should keep in mind the possibility that this is due to her partner's lack of skill rather than her own deficiency pattern.

b) Headache soon after orgasm

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 89

A headache soon after orgasm usually indicates rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel. It also may indicate Heart-Fire.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

To understand:

- That asking about sexual life is a key additional question to the traditional 10 questions.
- Why, when and how we ask about a patient's sexual life.
- The causes and manifestations of male sexual symptoms: impotence, lack of libido, premature ejaculation, nocturnal emissions and tiredness/dizziness after ejaculation.
- The key roles the Minister Fire plays in women's libido.

END NOTE

1. See Maciocia G 1998 *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, pp. 137-9.

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Women's Symptoms

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Why we ask**When we ask****How we ask****Menstruation***Menarche**Cycle**Amount of bleeding**Colour**Consistency**Pain**Premenstrual symptoms**Other symptoms occurring around menstruation***Vaginal discharge***Colour**Consistency**Smell***Fertility and pregnancy****Childbirth****Lactation****Miscarriage and abortion****Breast symptoms***Premenstrual breast distension**Breast lumps***Menopause****WHY we ask**

In women patients, questions about gynaecological symptoms are often crucial to reaching a diagnosis, even for non-gynaecological problems. For example, if a woman suffers from lower abdominal pain and we are uncertain as to what the cause is, if her periods are painful and the menstrual blood is dark and with clots, it indicates conclusively that the abdominal pain is due to Blood stasis.

WHEN we ask

Unless a woman presents specifically with a gynaecological complaint, I generally ask about her gynaecological history towards the end of the consultation. An enquiry into the gynaecological history even in postmenopausal women gives us an idea of the general condition of Qi and Blood. For example, a woman may have suffered throughout her life from heavy periods that were caused by Blood-Heat; if she comes to us after menopause and we suspect she might suffer from Blood-Heat but we are uncertain because the symptoms are quite mild, an enquiry into her menstrual history would help confirm the diagnosis of Blood-Heat.

HOW we ask

When asking about a woman's gynaecological history, we should always start from the beginning by enquiring about the conditions of her cycle 2 years after menarche (because it is common for the cycle to be irregular for the first 2 years before it settles down).

We should ask systematically first about the actual menstrual cycle and, second, about all other events in a woman's gynaecological history.

Regarding the menstrual cycle, we should ask the following questions:

- Age of menarche
- Cycle
- Amount of bleeding
- Colour of menstrual blood
- Clots
- Pain
- Premenstrual symptoms

With regard to other gynaecological events, we should ask specifically about:

- childbirth
- abortion
- miscarriage
- contraceptive pill

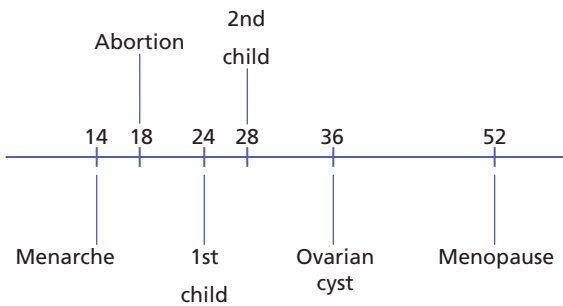


Figure 46.1. Diagram of gynaecological history.

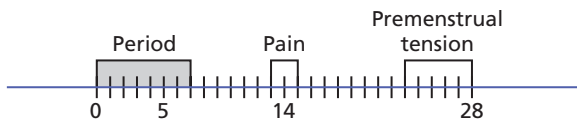


Figure 46.2. Diagram of menstrual cycle.

- intrauterine device (uterine coil)
- hormone replacement therapy (HRT)
- pelvic inflammatory disease
- any gynaecological surgical interventions (such as dilatation and curettage, laser treatment, hysteroscopy, colposcopy, laparoscopy, etc.).

Women's gynaecological history may sometimes be complicated; for example, a woman may have used the contraceptive pill or the coil for some years and may have had two children with possibly one or more miscarriages or terminations in between. In such cases, it is useful to draw a diagram illustrating clearly the ages at which such events occurred (Fig. 46.1). As an illustration, this figure shows the gynaecological history of a woman whose menarche occurred at 12 and who had an abortion at 18, a child at 24 and 28, an ovarian cyst at 36 and menopause at 52.

If the woman's cycle is irregular and characterized by discharges or mid-cycle pain or discharge, it is also useful to draw a diagram illustrating clearly at what part of the cycle such events take place (Fig. 46.2). As a way of illustration, this diagram shows the menstrual cycle of a woman whose period lasts 7 days and who experiences mid-cycle pain and premenstrual breast distension.

For example, some women may complain of prolonged menstrual bleeding whereas, in fact, they may suffer from mid-cycle bleeding; the following case history illustrates this.

Case History

A 42-year-old woman complained of 'almost constant menstrual bleeding'. She said her period would last for 3 weeks and she would then have a week without bleeding before the next period began. However, on closer interrogation it emerged that what she described as 'bleeding' was in fact a dark vaginal discharge. The diagnostic interpretation and treatment were therefore obviously different from what would be suggested by prolonged bleeding.

Diagnosis

Some gynaecological events (e.g. colposcopy) have a certain effect on the woman's physiology which we need to take into account when diagnosing; others make diagnosing practically impossible (e.g. the contraceptive pill).

The answers to questions regarding regularity of cycle, amount of bleeding, colour of menstrual blood, pain, etc., are unreliable if the woman is on the contraceptive pill or has an IUD. The contraceptive pill regularizes the periods, makes them usually scanty and less painful, and often prevents clotting; the IUD generally makes the periods heavier and more painful. In such cases, it is important to ask the patient what her menstrual cycle was like before she began using the contraceptive pill or IUD.

The following gynaecological features will be discussed:

1. Menstruation
 - a) Menarche
 - b) Cycle
 - c) Amount of bleeding
 - d) Colour of menstrual blood
 - e) Consistency
 - f) Pain
 - g) Premenstrual symptoms
 - h) Other symptoms occurring around menstruation
2. Vaginal discharge
 - a) Colour
 - b) Consistency
 - c) Smell
3. Fertility and pregnancy
4. Childbirth
5. Lactation
6. Miscarriage and abortion

7. Breast symptoms
 - a) Premenstrual breast distension
 - b) Breast lumps
8. Menopause

1. MENSTRUATION

When asking about menstruation, we should ask about the following aspects systematically:

- a) Menarche
- b) Cycle
- c) Amount of bleeding
- d) Colour
- e) Consistency
- f) Pain
- g) Premenstrual symptoms
- h) Other symptoms occurring around menstruation

When asking questions about the menstrual cycle, I always ask the woman how her periods were about 2 years after the menarche (we do this because it is normal for the period to be somewhat irregular for 2 years after menarche). This is important because it gives us an idea of the woman's *constitutional* menstrual cycle, eliminating the influence of subsequent gynaecological events, such as pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage, abortion, contraceptive pill, etc.

For example, a woman may have suffered heavy blood loss during childbirth and therefore develop a Blood deficiency which makes her periods scanty. The scanty period in this case shows not her constitutional menstrual cycle but the consequence of a definite cause of disease. By asking her about her menstruation 2 years after menarche, we formulate an idea of the constitutional state of her gynaecological system.

a) Menarche

The age of menarche ranges between 10 and 16 with a mean at 12.8. Menarche tends to occur at a younger age in industrialized countries compared with developing, agricultural societies.

It is normal for the periods to be somewhat irregular for about 2 years before they settle down into a pattern; for this reason, we should always ask about the condition of the menstrual cycle 2 years after menarche.

Early menarche (i.e. before about 13) may indicate Blood-Heat, whereas late menarche (after about 16) may indicate Blood and/or Kidney deficiency or Cold in the Uterus.

b) Cycle

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 84](#)

The length of the cycle is ideally 28 days, but it may vary from this norm. The regularity of the cycle is somewhat more important than its absolute value; thus, if the cycle is consistently of 32 days, this can be deemed normal and would not be considered 'late periods'. Moreover, an occasional deviation from a regular cycle should not be considered abnormal as the menstrual cycle is influenced by many factors, such as travelling, emotional stress, etc.

The following are the main areas of questioning with regard to the cycle:

- Always early (i.e. more than 7 days early): Qi deficiency, Blood-Heat or Empty Heat in the Blood from Blood or Yin deficiency
- Always late (i.e. more than 7 days late): Blood deficiency, stasis of Blood or stasis of Cold
- Irregular (sometimes late, sometimes early): stagnation of Liver-Qi, stasis of Liver-Blood, Spleen deficiency or Kidney deficiency
- Periods that stop and start: Blood stasis
- Periods that start or end with a brownish discharge: Blood stasis
- Mid-cycle bleeding: Damp-Heat (especially if there is also some pain), Qi deficiency, Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

It should be borne in mind that, as stated above, for approximately the first 2 years from menarche, the periods cycle may be somewhat irregular, which is quite normal.

Amenorrhoea may be due to severe Blood deficiency (as often happens in women athletes), Blood stasis or Cold in the Uterus.

c) Amount of bleeding

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 84](#)

The loss of blood during menstruation can vary between 30 and 80 ml. A period is defined as 'heavy' if the loss of blood is either profuse or prolonged. It is important to ask how many days the period lasts because a period that lasts more than 5 days is normally considered excessive in Chinese medicine, while one that lasts less than 4 days is normally considered scanty. Although most women would describe as abnormal a period that either lasts too long or is too heavy, they would not use the same term for a period that is too short or too scanty.

Table 46.1 Symptoms and patterns of heavy periods

Symptoms	Tongue	Pattern
Heavy menstrual bleeding that may come early with a flood, pale blood	Pale	Qi deficiency
Heavy menstrual bleeding, pale blood, irregular periods, backache, feeling cold, loose stools	Pale, wet	Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency
Heavy menstrual bleeding, trickling after the proper time, irregular periods, infertility, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating	Without coating	Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
Heavy menstrual bleeding, bright-red or dark-red blood, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, red face, thirst	Red with coating	Blood Heat
Heavy menstrual bleeding, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability	Red with redder sides, yellow coating	Liver-Fire
Heavy menstrual bleeding, irregular periods, trickling after the proper time, infertility, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, feeling of heat in the evening, five-palm heat	Red without coating	Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Blood Empty Heat
Heavy menstrual bleeding, painful periods with dark blood and dark clots, periods that start and stop	Purple sides	Blood stasis

CYCLE IRREGULARITIES

- Always early
 - Qi deficiency
 - Blood-Heat
 - Blood Empty Heat
 - Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Always late
 - Blood deficiency
 - Liver-Blood stasis
 - Cold in the Uterus
- Irregular
 - Liver-Qi stagnation
 - Liver-Blood stasis
 - Spleen deficiency
 - Kidney deficiency
- Hesitant start
 - Liver-Blood stasis
- Starting or ending with brownish discharge
 - Liver-Blood stasis
- Mid-cycle bleeding: Damp-Heat, Qi deficiency, Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency



In my experience, there is strong bias among practitioners to attribute heavy periods always to Qi deficiency. This is not so and, in my experience, about half the cases are due to Blood Heat and half to Qi deficiency.

AMOUNT OF BLEEDING

- Heavy
 - Qi deficiency
 - Blood-Heat
 - Blood Empty Heat
 - Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
 - Liver-Blood stasis
- Scanty
 - Blood deficiency
 - Cold in the Uterus
 - Liver-Blood stasis

In other words, many women would say their period is 'normal' when it lasts 3 days or even less or when the bleeding is very light.

A heavy loss of blood is due to Qi deficiency, Blood-Heat, Blood Empty Heat, Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency or Blood stasis. If the period is scanty, it denotes Blood deficiency, Cold in the Uterus or Liver-Blood stasis.

Table 46.1 summarizes the symptoms and patterns of heavy periods.

Case History

A 49-year-old woman had been suffering from menstrual flooding for 11 years. Since the birth of her second child, when she was 35, her cycle had been irregular, varying in length between 17 and 45 days; the period lasted 7 days in total and was painful, the menstrual blood had clots and she had a brown discharge for 1 day after the period. Her periods also had been painful

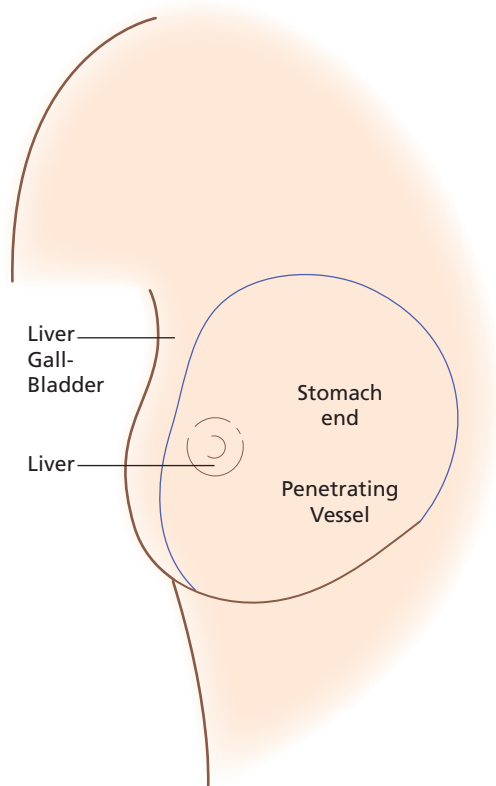


Figure 46.3. Organs influencing areas of the breast.

in the years following menarche at 12. Her gynaecological history was rather complicated as she had been on the contraceptive pill from the age of 18 to 30, she had a miscarriage at 30, the first child at 31, another miscarriage at 34 and a second child at 35 and the periods became very heavy at 38. In complicated histories such as this one it is helpful to draw two diagrams, one outlining the main gynaecological events of her life and the other depicting the menstrual cycle (Figs. 46.3 and 46.4).

Apart from the gynaecological problem, she has had difficulty in bladder and bowel control since the second pregnancy.

Her pulse was slightly Overflowing and Rapid and very Weak on both Rear positions; her tongue was Red and slightly Purple.

Diagnosis

The menstrual flooding is caused by Blood-Heat which is evidenced by the Red tongue and Overflowing-Rapid pulse. There is also some Blood stasis indicated by the

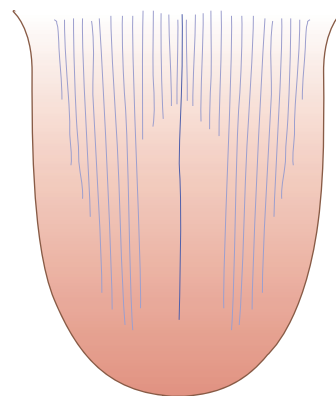


Figure 46.4. Patient's tongue.

painful period, menstrual clots, irregular cycle and slightly Purple tongue. There is also an underlying Kidney deficiency which is indicated by the weakness of the pulse in both Rear positions and by the fact that the menstrual flooding started after the second childbirth and she had two miscarriages.

The treatment principle is therefore to cool Blood, stop bleeding, invigorate Blood and tonify the Kidneys. In gynaecological problems, it is often appropriate to apply different treatment principles in each phase of the menstrual cycle. There are four phases in the menstrual cycle, the first being the period itself, during which Blood is moving; the second being the post-menstrual phase, during which there is a relative Blood deficiency; the third being ovulation, during which the Penetrating and Directing Vessels are active; and the fourth being the premenstrual phase, during which Liver-Qi moves. In this case, we can therefore cool and invigorate Blood during the premenstrual phase and the period itself and tonify the Kidneys after the period for about 2 weeks.

d) Colour

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 84](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

The colour of the menstrual blood varies slightly during the period. In general, it is usually dark-red, being lighter at the beginning, deep-red in the middle, and pinkish at the end of the period. The following are the main areas of questioning with regard to colour:

- Dark-red or bright-red: Blood-Heat
- Pale: Blood deficiency
- Blackish, very dark: stasis of Blood

- Purplish: Full-Cold
- Brownish like soya-bean sauce and dilute: Empty-Cold
- Scarlet-red: Empty-Heat in Blood

e) Consistency

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 84](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

The normal flow does not coagulate and there are no clots; the blood is neither dilute nor thick. The following are the main areas of questioning with regard to the consistency of menstrual blood:

- Clotted, with dark, dull clots: stasis of Blood or Cold in the Uterus
- Clotted, with dark but fresh-looking clots: Heat
- Large clots: stasis of Blood
- Small dark clots, but blood not dark: Cold in the Uterus
- Watery: Blood or Yin deficiency
- Sticky: Dampness or Damp-Heat in the Uterus

f) Pain

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 84](#)

Apart from a slight discomfort, normally the period should be almost painless. The main areas of questioning with regard to menstrual pain are as follows.

i) Time of pain

- Pain before the period: stagnation of Qi or stasis of Blood (the latter is typically relieved by the onset of the period)
- Pain during the period: Blood-Heat or Blood stasis
- Pain after the period: Blood deficiency

ii) Nature of pain

- Severe, stabbing pain: stasis of Blood
- Severe, cramping pain, eased by application of heat (such as a hot-water bottle): stasis of Cold
- Mild pain: either Blood-Heat or deficiency of Blood
- Dragging feeling in the lower abdomen with mild pain: sinking of Qi
- Feeling of heaviness in the lower abdomen with pain: Damp-Heat
- Pain on ovulation: Damp-Heat

[Table 46.2](#) summarizes the symptoms and patterns of painful periods.

MENSTRUAL PAIN

Time of pain

- Pain before the period: stagnation of Qi or stasis of Blood (the latter is typically relieved by the onset of the period)
- Pain during the period: Blood-Heat or Blood stasis
- Pain after the period: Blood deficiency

Nature of pain

- Severe, stabbing pain: stasis of Blood
- Severe, cramping pain, eased by application of heat (such as a hot-water bottle): stasis of Cold
- Mild pain: either Blood-Heat or deficiency of Blood
- Dragging feeling in the lower abdomen with mild pain: sinking of Qi
- Feeling of heaviness in the lower abdomen with pain: Damp-Heat
- Pain on ovulation: Damp-Heat

Case History

A 15-year-old girl had been suffering from severe abdominal pain for just over a year, beginning 18 months after menarche. The pain was on the right side of her abdomen, and she described it as a continuous, dull ache. However, it would become sharp and stabbing during her period and also at other times. The pain was relieved by the application of heat.

Three months before she came for treatment, the patient had an ovarian cyst removed from her left side and one on her right side had been drained. She also had recurrent attacks of oral and genital ulcers since the age of 9. These had been relieved by treatment with steroids. On questioning, the patient revealed that she was prone to constipation, specifically that she had infrequent bowel actions.

Her tongue body was Swollen and slightly Red on the sides. It had a white-sticky coating, particularly in the Gall-Bladder area and was peeled in the centre. Her pulse was Wiry on the right and slightly Wiry on the left, where it was also Empty at the Deep level.

Diagnosis

The stabbing nature of the abdominal pain, together with its alleviation by the application of heat, seems to suggest Cold in the Uterus as the main cause. The abdominal pain began shortly after menarche, which also would suggest the presence of Cold in the Uterus, as this is a very common pathogenic factor in young girls suffering from dysmenorrhoea. The Wiry quality of the pulse seems also to confirm the presence of

Table 46.2 Symptoms and patterns of painful periods

Symptoms	Tongue	Pattern
Abdominal distension and pain before or during the period	Normal or slightly red sides	Liver-Qi stagnation
Severe period pain which is alleviated by the passage of clots	Purple sides	Liver-Blood stasis
Severe spastic cramp-like menstrual pain that is alleviated by the application of heat, small-stringy clots on bright red blood, feeling cold during the period	Pale	Stagnation of Cold
Painful periods with a feeling of heaviness extending to the sacrum, mid-cycle pain, small-red clots	Red with sticky-yellow coating	Damp-Heat
Painful periods, heavy periods, irritability, thirst, bitter taste	Red sides	Stagnant Liver-Qi turning to Liver-Fire
Dull menstrual pain towards the end of or after the period, pain relieved by pressure, scanty periods	Pale	Deficiency of Qi and Blood
Dull period pain during or after the period, scanty bleeding, no clots	Pale and slightly swollen on the sides	Spleen-Yang and Liver-Blood deficiency
Dull period pain during or after the period, scanty period, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating	No coating	Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

stagnation. However, this initial hypothesis is not confirmed by the other clinical manifestations.

Ovarian cysts are usually characterized by Dampness, which is the case in this patient, as the presence of Dampness is confirmed by the swelling of the tongue and the sticky coating.

The recurrent oral and genital ulcers are caused by Damp-Heat in the Girdle and Directing Vessels. A disharmony of the Girdle Vessel is a frequent cause of the accumulation of Dampness in the genital system, especially in women. A disharmony of this Vessel is confirmed by the distribution of the tongue coating in the Gall-Bladder areas (Fig. 46.5). This disharmony of the Directing Vessel is shown clearly by the distribution of oral and genital ulcers as this vessel starts from Ren-1, flows through the external genitalia and, on the face, wraps around the mouth. In this case, Dampness is combined with Heat, which is evident from the redness of the sides of the tongue.

Therefore, we can conclude that the abdominal pain is caused by Damp-Heat and not by Cold as it would appear on first impression. The long-standing retention of Dampness in the Lower Burner (it started when she was 9) also led to Qi and Blood stasis and therefore the aggravation of the pain during the period. From a Western medicine point of view, recurrent oral and genital ulcers, which are inflammatory and noninfectious, are known as Behçet's disease.

The peeling of the central area of the tongue indicates Stomach-Yin deficiency, which was probably caused by Heat injuring Yin. The pulse being Empty at the Deep level confirms the Yin deficiency; however, it is Empty on the left side (rather than the right side as would be expected in Stomach-Yin deficiency), and this may be due to a deficiency of Liver-Yin. This is all the more likely owing to the disharmony of the Girdle Vessel which affects the Gall-Bladder and Liver channels.

Case History

A 28-year-old woman had been suffering from painful periods since menarche. The periods came regularly and lasted 9 to 10 days; the menstrual blood was dark, with occasional clots. The pain was stabbing at times, but at other times it was a dull, deep ache rather than a pain and with a pronounced feeling of heaviness. She said *'my whole lower body feels thick, heavy and stodgy'* which was clearly her way of expressing what, in Chinese medicine, is called 'a feeling of heaviness'. The pain was situated in the central-lower abdominal area and was alleviated by a hot bath. Recently, she had been experiencing pain on intercourse which was sharp and also located in the central-lower abdominal area. Apart from painful periods, she had been experiencing a dull, mid-cycle ache on the right-lower abdominal area for the past 2 years, which was accompanied by a

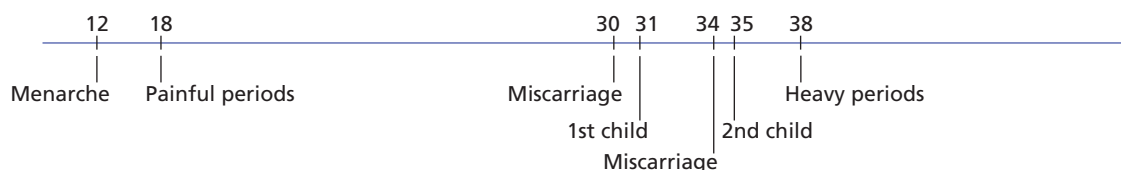


Figure 46.5. Diagram of gynaecological events.

dark-brown discharge. She also suffered from premenstrual tension, manifesting with irritability and distension of the breasts and abdomen. On the basis of an internal examination and an ultrasound scan, she had been diagnosed as suffering from endometriosis.

Other symptoms elicited from interrogation included cold limbs, occasionally a feeling of heat in the face, palpitations, anxiety and tightness of the chest.

The tongue was Red on the tip, and the pulse was slightly Slippery in general and slightly Tight on the left rear position.

Diagnosis

The stabbing character of the pain and the dark colour of the menstrual blood with clots clearly indicates Blood stasis which most probably derives from Cold in the Uterus. We can deduce the presence of Cold in the Uterus from the alleviation of the pain by a hot bath and also by the history. In fact, if the periods are painful from the time of menarche, the most common aetiological factor is invasion of the Uterus by external Cold due to playing games wearing shorts in cold and damp weather. In this case, therefore, Cold in the Uterus obstructs the circulation of blood and causes Blood stasis.

In addition to Blood stasis, there is also a clear pattern of Dampness in the Lower Burner, manifested by the occasional dull ache during the period, the pronounced feeling of heaviness and the mid-cycle pain. There is also some Liver-Qi stagnation causing the premenstrual symptoms.

Occasional feeling of heat in the face, cold limbs, palpitations, anxiety and tightness of the chest can be explained as manifestations of rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel. In fact, given these symptoms and the menstrual symptoms, we can say that all her symptoms reflect a disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel.

The main treatment principle is therefore simply to regulate the Penetrating Vessel by warming the Uterus, invigorating Blood and resolving Dampness from the Lower Burner.

Case History

A 43-year-old woman had been suffering from heavy periods for 15 years; the periods came regularly, lasted 7 days and were not painful, and the menstrual blood was dark with clots. The heaviest flow was in the first 3 days of the period. A month before her consultation a scan revealed the presence of fibroids in the uterus.

Her body build was robust, her eyes had good lustre, indicating good Spirit, and her general energy was good. She was rather overweight and her complexion was sallow. She had no other symptoms, apart from occasionally mucus in the stools. Questions investigating a possible Kidney deficiency revealed no symptoms of it. On palpation, her abdomen felt quite soft and the fibroids could not be palpated. Her tongue had a normal colour but was very Swollen. Her pulse was Slippery, Full and slightly Overflowing.

Diagnosis

Her body build, good Spirit and general energy indicate a good constitution, although being overweight indicates Phlegm. The presence of Phlegm is confirmed by the presence of occasional mucus in the stools, her being overweight, the swelling of the tongue and the Slippery pulse; the fibroids also could be partly due to Phlegm. The dark menstrual blood with clots and the presence of the fibroids themselves indicates Blood stasis localized in the Uterus and not severe enough to turn the tongue Purple. In this case, we can therefore conclude that the fibroids are due to a combination of both Phlegm and Blood stasis. The softness of her abdomen on palpation indicates that Phlegm is the predominant pathogenic factor in the formation of the fibroids.

The two major causes of heavy menstrual flow are usually Qi deficiency or Blood Heat, and in this case it is due to Blood Heat. There are not many signs of this because the tongue is not Red, but it is shown primarily by the Overflowing pulse. On the other hand, there are no signs of a Spleen or Kidney deficiency even

though the Spleen must be deficient for Phlegm to form. In her case, there are probably not many symptoms of deficiency because of her good constitution; this is also shown by the Full pulse, which, although it does indicate the presence of a pathogenic factor, it also indicates that the Upright Qi has not been severely affected.

In this case, it is necessary to treat her three main conditions, that is, Phlegm, Blood Heat and Blood stasis simultaneously, and the treatment principle is therefore to resolve Phlegm, cool and invigorate Blood and stop bleeding.

g) Premenstrual symptoms

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 85

The most common cause of premenstrual tension is Liver-Qi stagnation which manifests with irritability, depression and tendency to crying; these emotional states are often accompanied by abdominal or breast distension.

However, many other patterns may cause premenstrual tension. Liver-Fire and/or Heart-Fire may cause premenstrual tension manifesting with propensity to outbursts of anger, irritability and agitation. Phlegm-Fire also may cause premenstrual tension, manifesting with similar symptoms, as well as mental confusion; with Phlegm-Fire there is also premenstrual breast swelling and pain.

Premenstrual tension may be caused by Deficiency conditions and primarily Liver-Blood deficiency, Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency, Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness. In Deficiency conditions, premenstrual tension manifests primarily with depression, crying, lack of motivation and only a mild irritability.



Premenstrual tension is *not* always due to Liver-Qi stagnation.

Nausea or vomiting before the period denotes stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Stomach, and premenstrual constipation indicates stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Intestines and Spleen.

Headaches before the period indicate Liver-Qi stagnation or Liver-Yang rising. Distension of the breasts denotes Liver-Qi stagnation, but if the breasts become very swollen and painful, it may denote Phlegm (which,

in premenstrual problems, usually combines with Qi stagnation). Acute breast pain may be due to Toxic Heat in the breast, such as happens in acute mastitis after childbirth.

Retention of water with oedema before the period indicates Spleen-Yang and/or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

It is always important to ask whether there is a change in bowel movements around period time because such changes reflect the state of the Yang organs in a woman. Loose stools or constipation are frequent symptoms appearing at period time. Constipation at period time may be due to stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Intestines, Liver-Blood deficiency or Kidney-Yang deficiency. Loose stools may be due to Spleen-Qi deficiency, stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

PREMENSTRUAL SYMPTOMS

- Irritability, depression, moodiness, propensity to outbursts of anger, impatience, Wiry pulse: Liver-Qi stagnation
- Propensity to outbursts of anger, irritability, mental restlessness, shouting, anxiety, insomnia: Liver- and Heart-Fire
- Mental restlessness, anxiety, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep: Heart-Fire
- Mental restlessness, anxiety, insomnia, hyperactivity, dream-disturbed sleep, mental confusion: Phlegm-Fire harassing upwards
- Weepiness, crying, depression, mild irritability: Liver-Blood deficiency with secondary Liver-Qi stagnation
- Weepiness, crying, depression, lack of motivation, insomnia: Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
- Weepiness, crying, depression, lack of motivation, tiredness, lassitude: Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Weepiness, tiredness, lassitude, feeling of heaviness, swollen breasts: Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness and secondary Liver-Qi stagnation
- Nausea, vomiting: Liver-Qi invading the Stomach
- Constipation with bitty stools and abdominal distension: Liver-Qi invading the Intestines
- Constipation with dry stools: Liver-Blood deficiency
- Constipation with infrequent bowel movement: Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Loose stools: Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Loose stools with abdominal distension: stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen
- Diarrhoea: Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Headaches: Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Qi stagnation
- Breast distension: Liver-Qi stagnation and/or Phlegm
- Breast pain: severe Liver-Qi stagnation or Toxic Heat
- Oedema: Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Case History

A 36-year-old woman had been suffering from premenstrual swelling and pain of both breasts, but worse on the left, with a lump on the edge of the left breast which came up before the period and disappeared afterwards. She had been suffering from this problem for approximately 8 years. She suffered no other menstrual irregularity as her periods came regularly and were not too heavy or scanty and not painful.

On interrogation, it transpired that she also suffered from tiredness, floaters, weakness, dizziness, palpitations, loose stools and anxiety in the evening.

Her tongue was slightly Pale and Swollen on the sides and had a sticky coating. Her pulse was Fine and slightly Wiry.

Diagnosis

The breast pathology shows a clear condition of Liver-Qi stagnation because the swelling of the breast is clearly premenstrual; however, the breast lump, the pronounced swelling and the pain indicate that there is also Phlegm. This is Qi-Phlegm, and the lump comes and goes because of the Qi stagnation. Liver-Qi stagnation occurs against a background of Liver-Blood deficiency of which there are clear manifestations (tiredness, floaters, dizziness, Pale sides of the tongue, Fine pulse). There is also some Heart-Blood deficiency indicated by the palpitations and the anxiety in the evening. Finally, there is an underlying Spleen-Qi deficiency indicated by the weakness and the loose stools; the Spleen-Qi deficiency has given rise to Phlegm.

h) Other symptoms occurring around menstruation

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 85](#)

Headaches that occur during the period are usually due to Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire blazing, these occurring against a background of Blood-Heat. Headaches occurring after the period indicate Liver-Blood deficiency.

Constipation during the period may be due to Liver-Fire, whereas constipation after the period is due to Blood or Kidney deficiency.

Insomnia during the period indicates Blood-Heat, often with Liver-Fire and/or Heart-Fire. Insomnia after the period denotes Blood deficiency.

Diarrhoea after the period indicates Spleen-Yang and/or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

2. VAGINAL DISCHARGE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 89](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 54](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

By 'vaginal discharge' is meant an abnormal discharge and not the normal transparent, egg white-like secretion occurring during ovulation. Vaginal discharge must be differentiated according to colour, consistency and smell. An increase in vaginal secretions mid-cycle and during pregnancy is normal.

a) Colour

- White: Cold. Cold can derive from Spleen- or Kidney-Yang deficiency or exterior Cold-Dampness.
- Yellow: Heat, usually Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner
- Greenish: Damp-Heat in the Liver channel
- Red and white: Damp-Heat
- Yellow, red with white pus after menopause: Toxic Heat

b) Consistency

- Watery: Cold-Dampness and/or Deficiency condition
- Thick: Damp-Heat and/or Excess condition

c) Smell

- Fishy: Cold
- Leathery: Heat

3. FERTILITY AND PREGNANCY

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 86 and 89](#)

Infertility can be due to many different Deficient or Excess conditions. These are:

- Blood deficiency
- Kidney deficiency
- Stasis of Blood
- Cold in the Uterus
- Damp-Phlegm.

A slight feeling of nausea in the first 3 months of pregnancy is normal; persistent vomiting during the first 3 months of pregnancy or even continuing in the following months is a pathological sign which usually indicates rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel affecting

the Stomach channel. This can occur against a background of Stomach deficiency or Stomach-Heat.

Oedema during pregnancy indicates Kidney-Yang deficiency. High blood pressure denotes a Kidney deficiency with Liver-Yang rising, which may herald a preeclampsia state which is also characterized by headache, dizziness and blurred vision. A full eclampsia state manifests with convulsions, which, from a Chinese perspective, indicate the development of Liver-Wind from Liver and Kidney deficiency.

An aggravation or an amelioration of certain symptoms by pregnancy both indicate a Kidney deficiency. Most people think pregnancy is a weakening event in a woman's life; in my opinion this is not so, and a pregnancy can be weakening only if there is a preexisting Kidney deficiency and the woman does not look after herself. If any preexisting Kidney deficiency is not very severe and the woman looks after herself during pregnancy, this event may actually strengthen the Kidneys (because menstruation itself is moderately weakening and therefore its cessation can increase Blood and strengthen the Kidneys). For this reason, an aggravation of certain symptoms during pregnancy indicates that the Kidneys have been weakened by it, whereas an amelioration indicates that the Kidneys have been strengthened. Common examples of diseases that may get better or worse during pregnancy are asthma, migraine and rheumatoid arthritis.

FERTILITY AND PREGNANCY

- Infertility: Blood deficiency, Kidney deficiency, Blood stasis, Cold in the Uterus, Damp-Phlegm
- Severe morning sickness: Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel, Stomach-Heat
- Oedema during pregnancy: Kidney-Yang deficiency
- High blood pressure during pregnancy: Kidney deficiency with Liver-Yang rising
- Eclampsia: Liver-Wind



Pregnancy is not necessarily weakening to a woman's organism. It may have a neutral effect or it may even have a strengthening effect.

Case History

A 45-year-old woman had been trying to conceive for 7 years; she did have an 18-year-old child. Her periods were scanty, lasting only 2 or 3 days, she suffered from premenstrual tension and from abdominal distension

after the period; she also suffered from constipation and a dragging feeling in the lower abdomen during the period. Other symptoms elicited from interrogation included backache, occasional dizziness, frequent urination and nocturia. She also suffered from insomnia and anxiety. She was slightly overweight, and her eyes lacked sparkle to a severe degree.

She had seen a gynaecologist and had various tests, and the Western medicine diagnosis was endometriosis and ovarian cysts.

Her tongue was slightly Pale, and, although it had a sticky-yellow coating in the centre and root, it was Peeled on the sides and the front; her pulse was Slippery in general, slightly Moving on the left-Front and Middle positions, Weak on both Rear positions and Rapid (112 beats/min).

Diagnosis

This patient presents with a complex picture of patterns. There is definitely Dampness evidenced by her being overweight, the dragging feeling in the abdomen, the sticky tongue coating and the Slippery pulse. Dampness is associated with Heat because the tongue coating is yellow. Another pattern is that of Kidney deficiency, manifested by the backache, dizziness, frequent urination, nocturia, scanty periods and Weak pulse on both Rear positions.

The lack of sparkle in the eyes and the Moving and Rapid pulse suggest the presence of Heart pattern, probably due to shock. This is confirmed by the insomnia and the anxiety; the tongue is slightly Pale but also Peeled in the front; we can therefore conclude that there is deficiency of both Qi and Yin of the Heart. The premenstrual tension indicates Liver-Qi stagnation, but this is not a major problem in this case as it is secondary to the Kidney deficiency; this is confirmed by the fact that abdominal distension occurs *after* rather than before the period.

Case History

A 39-year-old woman had suffered from excessive body hair since the onset of puberty at the age of 15. She had recently been diagnosed with polycystic ovary syndrome after an ultrasound scan. Her menstrual cycle was 5 weeks long, the period lasted 5 to 6 days and she had a white, jelly-like vaginal discharge at mid-cycle.

She often felt tired and her sleep was not good, regularly waking up early in the morning. She had

a tendency towards constipation and suffered from haemorrhoids. Her hands and feet were often cold. Her mouth tended to be dry and she had catarrh in her throat.

The tongue was Swollen with Red sides and red points on the tip and with a sticky-yellow coating. The pulse was Deep-Weak and Slow (60 beats/min) overall, the right-Front and left-Rear positions being especially Weak.

Diagnosis

Excessive body hair and polycystic ovary syndrome often go hand in hand and, in this case, are caused by Phlegm, which has developed as a result of an underlying Kidney-Yang deficiency. Whereas in Western medicine, the excessive growth of body hair is explained by an imbalance between oestrogen and testosterone (with excessive levels of the latter), in Chinese medicine it is due to a disharmony of the Penetrating Vessel: the Penetrating Vessel is the Sea of Blood, and a disharmony may cause the Blood to promote the growth of body hair excessively. The Penetrating Vessel disharmony is also indicated by the onset of the problem at puberty, which is a time when the Directing and Penetrating Vessels are in a state of transition and change and are therefore susceptible to disharmonies.

The presence of Phlegm is confirmed by the Swollen tongue, the mid-cycle vaginal discharge and the ovarian cysts themselves. The symptoms of tiredness, constipation and cold extremities are due to the Kidney-Yang deficiency, which is shown by the pulse being Deep-Weak and Slow, especially in the left-Rear position.

The swelling and the redness of the sides of the tongue body, the sticky-yellow tongue coating and the red points on the tip indicate Phlegm-Heat affecting probably the Lungs and Heart, but she has hardly any symptoms of this apart from the dry mouth and the phlegm in the throat.

Case History

A 41-year-old woman had been trying to conceive for over a year without success. During that year she did become pregnant once, but the pregnancy was ectopic and she had to have her right tube removed. She had already had a child $2\frac{1}{2}$ years previously. She also complained of feeling tired and exhausted, with low motivation and lack of libido. Her sleep was

disturbed, and she occasionally experienced floaters and night-sweating.

Her periods were quite normal, being regular, lasting 5 days and being not too heavy or too scanty and not painful. She had a history of abdominal pain caused by pelvic inflammatory disease, causing dyspareunia (pain on intercourse) which had improved with acupuncture.

Her tongue was practically normal, being only very slightly Pale on the sides and with a slightly Red tip with red points. Her pulse was Wiry in general, slightly Slippery and noticeably Full at the Middle level.

Diagnosis

This case history is presented here as an example of the importance of the pulse in diagnosis. On first analysis, it would appear that this patient suffers from a Kidney deficiency which is causing her to be infertile, tired, exhausted and lacking in motivation and libido. However, further questioning aimed at confirming or excluding the Kidney deficiency did not reveal any backache, dizziness or tinnitus. Moreover, she did conceive once, resulting in an ectopic pregnancy, which normally indicates an obstruction of the Lower Burner from Dampness, Phlegm, stagnation of Qi or stasis of Blood. Therefore, if she is infertile, it is probably more from a Full condition than from a Kidney deficiency. Furthermore, the pulse and the tongue do not show a deficiency of the Kidneys or any other organ.

The Wiry pulse clearly indicates severe stagnation of Qi, probably deriving from emotional problems, which is confirmed by the Red tip with red points on the tongue. Therefore, we can conclude that her exhaustion, lack of motivation and lack of libido are due more to mental depression than to a Kidney deficiency. Moreover, the Full quality of the Middle level of the pulse (corresponding to Blood) confirms a condition of Blood stasis in the Uterus. Her history of pelvic inflammatory disease and dyspareunia confirms this diagnosis.

The treatment principle in this case therefore should be to move Qi, pacify the Liver, invigorate Blood and calm the Mind.

4. CHILDBIRTH

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 87](#)

The following are the main areas of questioning with regard to the conditions of labour:

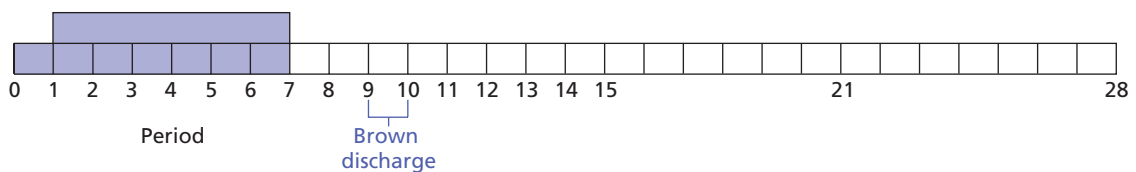


Figure 46.6. Diagram of menstrual cycle.

- Nausea and heavy bleeding after labour: exhaustion of the Penetrating Vessel
- Sweating and fever after labour: exhaustion of Qi and Blood
- Postnatal depression: Liver-Blood and Heart-Blood deficiency
- Postnatal psychosis: stasis of Blood in the Uterus and Heart

5. LACTATION

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 87](#)

Breast milk not flowing (agalactia) after childbirth may be due to Blood deficiency, Stomach and Spleen deficiency or Liver-Qi stagnation. Spontaneous flow of milk after childbirth may be due to Spleen-Qi deficiency, Stomach-Heat or Liver-Fire.

Mastitis after childbirth is due to Toxic Heat in the Stomach channel.

6. MISCARRIAGE AND ABORTION

It is important to ask about miscarriages and abortion, as they weaken a woman's body. There is a saying in Chinese gynaecology that states: '*Miscarriage is more serious than childbirth.*' It is easy to understand why this should be so: during a miscarriage there is a heavy loss of blood. Moreover, from a mental-emotional point of view, it means a great loss to the woman with ensuing sadness and grief, which are often underestimated.

Abortion is also weakening but to a lesser degree because there is not the loss of blood that occurs during a spontaneous miscarriage.

Miscarriage before 3 months indicates a Kidney deficiency, whereas miscarriage after 3 months denotes sinking of Spleen-Qi, Liver-Blood stasis or Blood-Heat.

7. BREAST SYMPTOMS

The breasts in women are influenced primarily by the Stomach channel, which controls the main tissues of the breast and the lactiferous ducts; the Liver channel influences the nipple but also, together with the Gall-Bladder channel, the lateral side of the breast; the Penetrating Vessel also influences the lactiferous ducts and the connective tissues of the breast which, in Chinese medicine, would be classified as 'Membranes' (*Huang*). The Muscle channels of the Gall-Bladder, Heart and Pericardium flow over the breast.

The Penetrating Vessel originates from the Uterus and connects with the breasts, and this relationship can be seen in the linkage that exists between menstrual blood and breast milk: breast milk is a transformation of menstrual blood that occurs after childbirth, and the Penetrating Vessel, being the Sea of Blood, is therefore, after childbirth, the source of breast milk. Many breast pathologies, including breast lumps, especially in women after 40, nearly always occur against a background of 'disharmony' of the Penetrating Vessel, which means either a deficiency or stasis of Blood in this vessel.

a) Premenstrual breast distension

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 12](#)

One of the most common presenting breast symptoms is premenstrual breast distension, which is a very typical sign of Liver-Qi stagnation. Although Liver-Qi stagnation affecting the breasts is a very common condition, stagnation of Lung-Qi also has an important influence on the breasts in women. Emotional problems such as sadness, grief and worry affect the Lungs and may impair the circulation of Qi in the chest and therefore in the breasts as well. For this reason, many breast pathologies in women, including breast lumps, may be due to stagnation of Lung-Qi rather than Liver-Qi and

to the above-mentioned emotions rather than anger or repressed anger. In particular, some modern Chinese doctors relate breast pathologies to the emotional stress deriving from separation such as widowhood, breaking up of relationships, divorce, death of one's children or bereavement at a young age from the death of one's spouse.

If the breasts become also swollen, uncomfortable and noticeably larger before the period, this also indicates Liver-Qi stagnation but combined with Phlegm. If the breasts are distended and noticeably painful before the periods, this indicates Liver-Blood stasis. A slight feeling of distension of the breasts after the periods is usually due to Liver-Blood deficiency.

PREMENSTRUAL BREAST DISTENSION

- Liver-Qi stagnation: pronounced distension, irritability, Wiry pulse
- Lung-Qi stagnation: slight breast distension, sadness, Weak pulse
- Liver-Qi stagnation with Phlegm: swollen and painful breasts, Swollen tongue
- Liver-Blood stasis: painful breasts, Purple tongue
- Liver-Blood deficiency: mild breast distension, Choppy pulse

b) Breast lumps

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 88](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 12](#); Part 3 Palpation, [Chapter 51](#)

Another common pathology of the breasts in women is the development of lumps.

Relatively soft, movable, painless, multiple lumps with distinct edges usually indicate fibrocystic disease, which, from the Chinese point of view, is due to Phlegm.

A single, movable, relatively hard lump with distinct edges usually indicates a fibroadenoma, which, from the Chinese point of view, is due to a combination of Phlegm and Blood stasis.

A single, painless, immovable lump with indistinct edges may indicate carcinoma of the breast, which, from the Chinese point of view, is usually due to a combination of Phlegm, Qi stagnation and Blood stasis.

The age of the patient may give a rough indication of which is the most likely of these three pathologies because fibroadenomas are more common between the ages of 20 and 30, cysts between 30 and 50 and carcinoma from 50 onwards: of course, these are only general statistical indications which always have exceptions in practice.

BREAST LUMPS

Chinese medicine differentiation

- Relatively soft, movable, painless multiple lumps with distinct edges: Phlegm
- Single, movable, relatively hard lump with distinct edges: Phlegm with Blood stasis
- Single, not movable, relatively hard lump with indistinct edges: Blood stasis

Western medicine differentiation

- Soft, movable, painless, multiple lumps with distinct edges: fibrocystic disease
- Single movable, relatively hard lump with distinct edges: fibroadenoma
- Single, not movable, relatively hard lump with indistinct edges: carcinoma

Case History

A 39-year-old woman had been suffering from a lump in the left breast (upper-left quadrant) for 5 years; the size of the lump had varied in relation to her menstrual cycle, increasing slightly before the period and decreasing afterwards. The lump was sometimes also painful. A biopsy, mammogram and magnetic resonance imaging scan confirmed the absence of any malignancy. The lump was neither a fibroadenoma nor a cyst and had been described simply as 'breast tenderness and nodularity'. On palpation, the lump was firm but not too hard, elongated and mobile. There was no lymph node involvement in the axilla.

Her periods were regular, not painful, not too heavy or scanty; she did suffer from premenstrual distension of the breasts and abdomen. She had no other symptoms, apart from a tendency to loose stools.

On observation, her complexion was dull and sallow and her eyes were slightly 'staring'; there was also a horizontal red vein starting from the outer corner of the left eye and reaching the edge of the pupil. In addition, the white under the pupil was visible (this is not normally visible).

Her tongue was Red on the sides and tip, had a yellow coating and teeth marks in the left breast area. Her pulse was Slippery on the whole, the left side was Slippery and Wiry, especially so on the Liver position, while the left-Front position was relatively Overflowing; the pulse was also slightly Rapid (84 beats/min).

Diagnosis

In breast lumps, the most common pathogenic factors are Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Blood stasis and Phlegm

appearing in varying combinations. In this case, there are signs of all three patterns. There is Liver-Qi stagnation because of the premenstrual distension, the varying size of the lump in relation to the menstrual cycle and the Wiry pulse. There is Liver-Blood stasis because the lump is firm and slightly painful and the pulse is Wiry; there is Phlegm because the pulse is Slippery. Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Blood stasis are the predominant patterns compared to Phlegm. The chronic Liver-Qi stagnation has given rise to Liver-Heat and Heart-Heat, as evidenced by the Red sides and tip on the tongue; this is also confirmed by the rapidity of the pulse and the Overflowing quality on the Heart pulse.

The teeth marks in the left breast area on the tongue indicate that the breast pathology occurs against a background of Spleen-Qi deficiency which is also confirmed by the tendency to loose stools. The slightly staring look of the eyes indicates that the Mind and Spirit are disturbed from emotional problems which, on interrogation, she confirmed having. The showing of the white under the pupil is generally a poor prognostic sign. The red vein in the left eye was in the Heart and Lung area and in the lower part of the sclera corresponding to the chest.¹

8. MENOPAUSE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, Chapter 89

By menopause is meant the period of time during which levels of oestrogen decline sharply, menstruation stops and a woman becomes infertile. From the Chinese point of view, the menopause is due to a natural, physiological decline of Kidney-Essence and it is therefore not a gynaecological 'disease'. It requires therapeutic intervention only when the manifestations of this transitional period become uncomfortable or distressing.



The menopause is *not* a 'disease'!

The main manifestations which usually bring a woman to seek treatment are hot flushes, sweating and vaginal dryness. Strictly speaking, these three are the only symptoms directly related to a decline of hormone levels. However, many other symptoms may appear due to decline of Kidney-Essence and other allied patterns. These may be headaches, depression, anxiety, irritability, crying, poor memory, clumsiness, insomnia, tiredness, dry skin and hair.

It is a common misconception that menopausal symptoms are always due to Kidney-Yin deficiency because they are characterized by hot flushes. Although the hot flushes will obviously be more intense if there is a Kidney-Yin deficiency, they also occur in women suffering from Kidney-Yang deficiency because, especially during the menopausal years, a Kidney deficiency nearly always includes a deficiency of both Yin and Yang. This very frequently gives rise to contradictory hot and cold symptoms. For example, a menopausal woman suffering from Kidney-Yin deficiency may experience severe hot flushes, night-sweating and dryness of the vagina and skin, but she may also suffer from cold feet. In contrast, a menopausal woman suffering from Kidney-Yang deficiency may experience cold feet and a cold feeling in general, frequent urination and hot flushes.

There are two other patterns associated with a Kidney deficiency in the menopausal years which are particularly common, and these are Liver-Yang rising (causing headaches) and Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat (causing insomnia, anxiety, agitation and poor memory).

Finally, menopausal symptoms may be aggravated by preexisting patterns, the main one being Phlegm. This may aggravate the hot flushes and also worsen the mental-emotional symptoms associated with the menopause.



Menopausal symptoms occur against a background of Kidney-Yang as often as Kidney-Yin deficiency.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

To understand:

- That asking a woman about her gynaecological symptoms is vital in gaining information on her underlying health, therefore, when and how we ask.
- The gynaecological history.
- Breast lumps and premenstrual breast distension.
- The systematic approach to menstruation questioning: amount and duration of bleeding, colour, consistency, cycle length, menarche, menopause, pain, premenstrual symptoms and other symptoms concomitant with menstruation.
- The key patterns and implications of fertility, miscarriage and abortion, childbirth, lactation problems and vaginal discharge.

END NOTE

1. Maciocia, G. 1999 *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, p. 147.

Children's Symptoms

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Mother's pregnancy

Childbirth

Post-partum problems

Childhood diseases

Digestive symptoms

Respiratory symptoms and earache

Cough and wheezing

Earache

Chronic catarrh

Sleep

Immunizations

Slow development

1. Mother's pregnancy
2. Childbirth
3. Post-partum problems
4. Childhood diseases
5. Digestive symptoms
6. Respiratory symptoms and earache
7. Sleep
8. Immunizations
9. Slow development

1. MOTHER'S PREGNANCY

The period in the womb is extremely important in influencing the constitution of the baby. Many factors affect the baby and his or her constitution in the gestation period. Emotional shocks to the mother can affect the child's nervous system and the Heart. The consumption of alcohol and recreational drugs and smoking obviously affect the child's constitution adversely.

When a baby cries a lot at night and vomits frequently, this may be due to what the Chinese call 'womb Heat', which itself may be due to either the pregnant mother's consumption of excessively hot foods or, more commonly, her suffering from shock during pregnancy. Prenatal shock also may manifest with a bluish tinge on the baby's forehead and chin.

2. CHILDBIRTH

The conditions of childbirth have an important influence on the baby's constitution. Premature cutting of the umbilical cord, induction or a Caesarean birth can affect the baby's constitution adversely and, in particular, may cause a Lung deficiency. Therefore, if a baby or very young child suffers from a Lung deficiency, this may be due to the above-mentioned conditions in childbirth.

The interrogation of children, especially young children, obviously needs to be carried out with the help of the child's parents or other relatives. In older children (over the age of 5), although we still need the help of the parents in describing the child's symptoms and signs, it is important to listen carefully to the child as well. When asking a child about his or her symptoms, we should obviously avoid the use of difficult medical terms such as 'abdomen' and use colloquial terms such as 'tummy'.

Most of the questions related to adults discussed in the previous chapters apply to children as well, such as digestive system and taste, thirst, defecation, urination, etc. There are, however, several questions that pertain to children only, and these are the mother's pregnancy, childbirth, post-partum problems, immunizations and childhood diseases. In addition to the above areas of questioning, questions about the child's digestive system, respiratory symptoms, earache and sleep are also important and have a slightly different significance than in adults.

The following aspects of children's conditions will be discussed:

3. POST-PARTUM PROBLEMS

The main question to ask is about breast-feeding: lack of breast-feeding or too short breast-feeding often adversely affects a baby's digestive system, causing either a Stomach deficiency or retention of food in the Stomach. Giving solid food to babies too early (before 6 months of age) is a very common cause of retention of food in babies and children.

4. CHILDHOOD DISEASES

We should always ask parents about their child's childhood diseases. A history of several childhood diseases with rashes (measles, chickenpox, German measles) suggests the child's tendency to Heat. Whooping cough has a weakening effect on the child's lungs, and this may cause a weak Lung constitution and the tendency to develop Lung patterns later in life.

5. DIGESTIVE SYMPTOMS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 90](#)

Digestive symptoms are very common in children due to an inherently weak Spleen and Stomach at birth: the younger the child, the more common the digestive symptoms. The two most common causes of abdominal pain in children are retention of Cold in the Stomach and Intestines and stagnation of Qi in the Intestines. In babies, retention of food (called accumulation disorder in babies) is very common and manifests with vomiting of milk and with colic.

6. RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS AND EARACHE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 90](#)

Questions concerning cough, wheezing, breathlessness or earache are always important in the child's interrogation because children are very prone to invasions of Wind, which may cause the above symptoms.

a) Cough and wheezing

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 90](#)

A history of repeated bouts of cough and wheezing nearly always indicates a residual pathogenic factor

(usually Lung Phlegm-Heat) following invasions of external Wind. These give rise to a residual pathogenic factor when the Wind is not cleared properly, when antibiotics are used too frequently or when the child has a weak constitution. In such cases the child will suffer from a chronic cough and/or wheezing and will be prone to frequent respiratory infections.

b) Earache

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 90](#)

A history of chronic earache indicates the presence of a residual pathogenic factor which, in this case, is usually Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder channel. This is also the result of frequent, acute ear infections, which are usually treated by the repeated administration of antibiotics, which only make matters worse by promoting the development of a residual pathogenic factor.

c) Chronic catarrh

The condition of chronic catarrh is very common in children and is the consequence of a residual pathogenic factor after repeated invasions of Wind combined with a Spleen deficiency leading to the formation of Phlegm. A child with this condition will have a constantly runny nose or a blocked nose, cough and glue ear.

7. SLEEP

We should always ask about sleep in babies and children because not only does it give us an indication of the state of the Mind, but a disturbance of sleep often also reflects the presence of certain pathogenic factors.

Disturbed sleep with crying in babies is often due to retention of food and Stomach-Heat, in which case the baby will cry out loudly. If the baby cries relatively quietly during the night, it may be due to a prenatal shock.

In older children, disturbed sleep may be due to the same factors as in adults, but the most common ones are Liver-Fire, Stomach-Heat and Retention of Food.

8. IMMUNIZATIONS

A full discussion on immunizations is beyond the scope of this book. To understand the effect of immunizations from a Chinese perspective, it is necessary to refer to the theory of the Four Levels. When a pathogenic factor invades the body, it enters the Defensive-Qi level first,

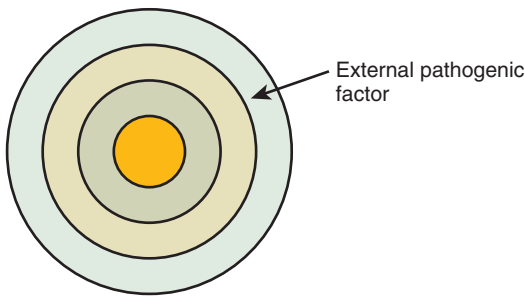


Figure 47.1. The four levels.

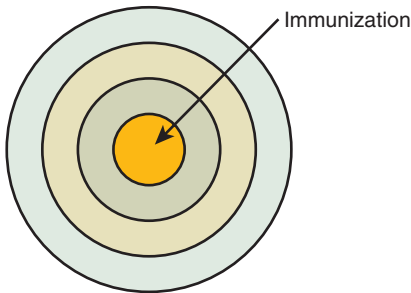


Figure 47.2. The four levels and immunizations.

and, if not expelled, it progresses through the Qi, Nutritive-Qi and Blood levels; the Four Levels represent four different energetic layers of penetration of Heat, with the Defensive-Qi level being the most superficial and the Blood level the deepest (Fig. 47.1).

From a Chinese perspective, therefore, it could be argued that immunizations basically consist of injecting a 'pathogenic factor' (i.e., the live or attenuated germ) directly at the Blood level. This may cause Latent Heat to develop at the Blood level, which may cause problems for the child in both the short term and the long term (Fig. 47.2).

In the short term, Latent Heat may cause a skin rash, insomnia and a temporary change in the child's character. The long-term effects of immunizations are more difficult to establish and the subject of great controversy. However, if immunizations lead to Latent Heat at the Blood level, it is quite possible that they may have serious long-term effects. These include brain damage,

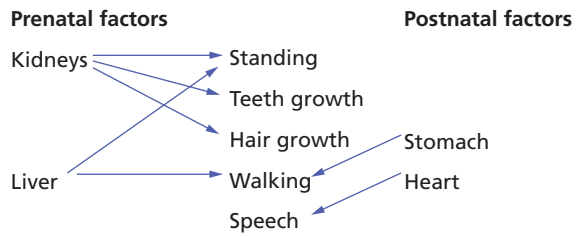


Figure 47.3. Prenatal and postnatal conditions affecting the five retardations.

possibly autism, asthma, chronic cough, allergies and skin diseases later in life.

The effect of immunizations from the Chinese perspective is also discussed in [Chapter 48](#).



Immunizations are a common cause of Latent Heat in children, which may persist into adulthood.

9. SLOW DEVELOPMENT

Slow development in children was summarized in ancient China as the 'Five Retardations'. These consist of slow development in standing, walking, teeth growth, hair growth and speech.

Slow development is caused primarily by congenital weakness of the Liver and Kidneys, with the Kidneys affecting standing, teeth growth and hair growth and the Liver affecting standing and walking. Among postnatal causes, the Stomach influences walking and the Heart speech. [Figure 47.3](#) illustrates the influence of prenatal and postnatal deficiencies on the Five Retardations.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The specific questions appropriate for understanding a child's health: mother's pregnancy, childbirth, post-partum problems, immunizations and childhood diseases.
- The additional important areas of questioning which have a different significance in children to that in adults: digestive system, especially due to immaturity of the Spleen and Stomach at birth, respiratory symptoms, earache and sleep.

48

Diagnosis of the Causes of Disease

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Interactions between causes of disease*Interaction of trauma with climate**Interaction of hereditary weak constitution with diet**Interaction of emotional problems at puberty and overwork**Interaction of weak heart constitution and emotional problems***The five stages of life***Childhood**Adolescence**Young adulthood**Middle age**Old age***The causes of disease***Heredity**Emotions**Overwork**Diet**Climate**Trauma**Drugs, including immunizations**Recreational drugs**Excessive sexual activity*

As mentioned previously, the identification of the possible causes of the patient's disharmony is linked to general enquiries about his or her emotional life, working life, diet, history of shocks or traumas, family history and environmental influences. I usually begin by carrying out a specific interrogation to identify the patterns of disharmony *before* delving into these aspects of the patient's life. It is important not to confuse the general interrogation to find the *causes* of disease with the specific interrogation to identify the *patterns* of disharmony.

Identifying the causes of disease is not easy and therefore not always possible, but to try to do so is important, as it is only by finding the causes of disease that we can help the patient to eliminate them or minimize them if at all possible. Even if the patient can do nothing about a particular cause that is rooted in the

past (such as an earlier accident), its identification is still important in order that we may channel our advice to the patient along the right lines. For example, there is no point in delving deeply into a patient's emotional life if the cause of the problem is a past accident; vice versa, there is no point in tinkering with a patient's diet or submitting him or her to strict dietary prohibitions if the cause of the problem is clearly emotional.

One of the strengths of Chinese medicine when compared with some branches of modern complementary medicine that consider a particular cause of disease to the exclusion of all others is precisely that it contemplates many different causes of disease without a particular emphasis on one or another.

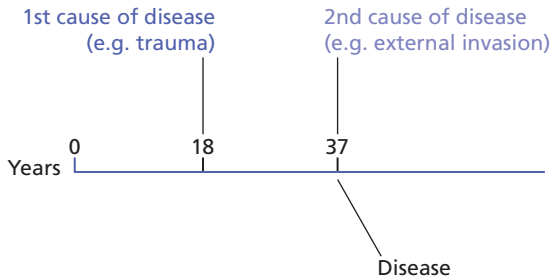
Traditionally, the causes of disease were differentiated according to three broad categories: external (due to climate), internal (due to emotions) and miscellaneous. Today, this classification is no longer relevant (not least because some of the most important causes of disease are in the 'miscellaneous' group), and we need not follow it. The main causes of disease, listed in approximate order of their importance and frequency, are:

- heredity
- emotions
- overwork
- diet
- climate
- trauma
- drugs, including immunizations
- 'recreational' drugs
- excessive sexual activity.

I find that when identifying a cause or causes of disease, it is helpful to divide a person's life into five distinct ages (see later). Because each cause of disease is more prevalent during a certain period of life, establishing when the cause arose helps us identify the disease.

There seldom is only one cause of disease; nearly always, a disease results from the combination of at least two causes. Usually one cause occurs at a certain

(a)



(b)

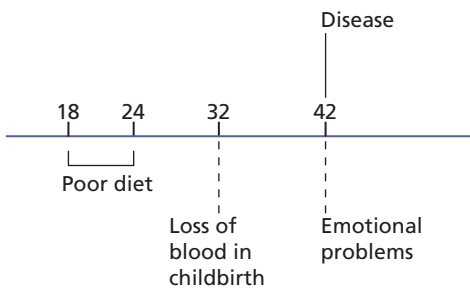


Figure 48.1. Interaction of causes of disease.

point of the patient's life; then, some years later, another cause intervenes and the combination of the two triggers a disharmony (Fig. 48.1). Some examples will be given below.

1. INTERACTIONS BETWEEN CAUSES OF DISEASE

a) Interaction of trauma with climate

Trauma to a knee that occurred at a young age when the patient was playing sports may heal without any apparent consequence, but when, years later, the patient is then subject to invasion of Cold and Dampness (when he or she goes out walking in the rain and remains in wet clothes for the whole day), the patient may develop Painful Obstruction Syndrome in that knee. A previous trauma, in fact, often explains the unilaterality of a particular joint problem.

b) Interaction of hereditary weak constitution with diet

A girl is born with a weak Stomach and Spleen constitution which appears to improve after age 7, as often happens. When the girl reaches 14, she becomes a vegetarian. Her diet now consists mainly of cheese and salads: this interacts with the preexisting weak Stomach and Spleen constitution to cause Spleen-Qi deficiency and possibly also Blood deficiency.

c) Interaction of emotional problems at puberty and overwork

A girl suffers deep emotional traumas around puberty, due to family conflicts. These have no apparent effect until she is an older woman. At the age of 27 she is working very hard and for very long hours: the interaction of the emotional problems at puberty (which affect the Directing and Penetrating vessels) with the overwork later in life causes gynaecological problems, possibly endometriosis.

d) Interaction of weak heart constitution and emotional problems

A male child is born with a weak Heart constitution manifesting with a nervous disposition, restlessness in sleep and a deep Heart crack on the tongue. At a later age, the young man suffers deep emotional stress due to relationship difficulties. The interaction of a preexisting weak Heart constitution and the subsequent emotional problems causes serious Heart patterns and possibly severe anxiety and depression.

2. THE FIVE STAGES OF LIFE

The patient's life can be differentiated into five stages:

- Childhood (from birth to puberty)
- Adolescence (from puberty to about 20)
- Young adulthood (from 20 to 40)
- Middle age (from 40 to 60)
- Old age (from 60 onwards)

Of course, the above age limits are intended only as a guideline and individual cases may differ according to individual body conditions. For example, a 38-year-old man who is in very poor health could be included in the middle-aged group, whereas a youthful and healthy 42-year-old person could be included in the young

adulthood age group. The following are the main characteristics and possible aetiology and pathology of these five ages.

a) Childhood

During early childhood there are only three possible causes of disease: weak hereditary constitution, irregular feeding and climate. Therefore, if a patient has suffered from a particular complaint since early childhood, this can be due to one of these three causes. We can eliminate climate as a cause because it does not usually cause long-lasting consequences (unless there is a residual pathogenic factor), so the problem can therefore be due only to heredity or irregular feeding. An example of such a problem is early-onset atopic disease (asthma and eczema), which is usually due to a hereditary weakness of the Lung's and Kidney's Defensive-Qi systems.

A new possible cause of disease in young children is immunizations, which are often the cause of chronic infections, sleep problems or hyperactivity.

Older children's main causes of disease are primarily diet, climate, emotions and traumas. For example, if a patient has been suffering from persistent headaches since childhood, this could be due to either a trauma to the head or irregular diet as a child. The emotional life of a child is quite different from that of an adult, and a child's emotional problems are largely the reflection of the family's emotional state.

b) Adolescence

Adolescence is a very vulnerable period of life on both a physical and an emotional level, especially for girls. Taking a careful history will often reveal the onset of a particular problem during adolescence. For example, if a girl has been suffering from headaches since the onset of menarche (which can be established only with very careful questioning), this most probably indicates Liver-Blood deficiency (resulting in Liver-Yang rising) as the main cause of the problem. This, in turn, is most probably due to dietary irregularity or an injudicious vegetarian diet.

Skin problems from this age also may be due to the aggravation of Blood deficiency with the onset of the menarche. If a young woman has been suffering from painful periods since their onset, this almost certainly points to invasion of Cold in the Uterus during early adolescence when the Uterus is in a particularly vulnerable state.

Adolescence is also a vulnerable time from the emotional point of view, and deep emotional problems in a young adult often stem from that time.

c) Young adulthood

Many events characterize the early young adulthood – for example, leaving home, change of diet, sexual activity and infections.

Leaving home often coincides with a deterioration in the young person's dietary habits characterized by irregular meals, eating 'fast foods', and often becoming vegetarian. When practised without a proper understanding of nutrition, a vegetarian diet may lead to Blood deficiency, especially in girls. Therefore, digestive problems later in life often have their root in the early 20s.

Young adulthood is also the time of emotional stress deriving from work, relationships and unresolved family situations. The pulse reflects the emotional cause of disease quite accurately. For example, if the Lung pulse is somewhat full and the patient looks sad, it may be due to sadness or grief which has not been expressed (the fullness of the Lung pulse would indicate this). If the Lung pulse is particularly Weak and without wave and the eyes lack lustre, I may enquire whether events in the patient's life have caused him or her sadness or grief.

If the Heart pulse is Overflowing and there is a Heart crack on the tongue, I may ask if the patient has suffered from a shock. If the Heart pulse is Choppy, the complexion dull, the eyes lustreless and the voice weak and weepy, it often indicates long-standing sadness.

If the pulse is Wiry on all positions, I may enquire whether there is some situation in the patient's life that is causing frustration, anger or resentment.

The pulse, complexion and eyes often point to the true emotion underlying the disease, sometimes even contradicting the patient's own perception. For example, a patient complained of various symptoms which she attributed to the anger she felt at having suffered sexual abuse as a teenager. Her therapist also had identified anger as a cause of her symptoms. However, her very pale complexion, sad eyes and Weak pulse without wave, especially on the Lung position, showed a different picture: in other words, all the signs pointed to sadness and grief as the predominant emotions. I therefore asked her how she felt about her past experiences, and she confirmed that those were the predominant emotions.

Another case showed almost the opposite situation. A young woman complained of premenstrual tension and depression; she looked quite sad and her voice was somewhat weepy. However, her pulse was not weak but somewhat full; in particular, it was Moving, especially on the Heart position. I asked her if she had suffered a shock during childhood, and she burst into tears, telling me about the sexual abuse suffered from an uncle.

d) Middle age

The main causes of disease in middle age are emotions, overwork and diet.

The emotional state of middle age may take two opposite directions: some people have been able to resolve the emotional problems of their youth and have settled into a way of life that pays attention to the needs of the Self; for others, middle age is a time of crisis and emotional turmoil when every aspect of their life is questioned. Most people overcome this crisis to achieve a better emotional balance.

Overwork is probably the most important cause of disease in middle age. This comes about because middle age is a time when a person usually reaches the peak of their profession, which imposes the heaviest demands. Unfortunately, this comes at a time when our energy is naturally declining and Kidney-Qi begins to decline too. Most people make unreasonable demands on their own bodies; they expect their energy to be the same as when they were in their 30s or even 20s and have no idea about the need for rest: they think it is 'normal' to get up at 6.30 in the morning, catch a train at 7.30, work all day under conditions of stress, eat a sandwich at their desk for lunch without any interruption from work and return home at 9 in the evening. This constitutes 'overwork' and is a major cause of Kidney deficiency in the Western world.

e) Old age

Old age is a time when causes of disease have a lesser impact than in any other period of life. Generally speaking, past causes of disease are already well entrenched and usually no new causes of disease play a role. This is not because diet or emotional problems do not affect the elderly but because any cause of disease at this time of one's life inevitably has its roots in the distant past; for this reason, a change in habits is somewhat less important in the elderly than at any other time of life,

particularly with regard to diet. For example, if an 85-year-old man suffers from Phlegm due to lifelong excessive consumption of greasy foods, a change in diet at this late time of life will have little impact on his organism (although it may still be advisable for him to make these changes). Of course, that is not to say that other changes in life's habits do not have an impact on a person's health; for example, it is never too late to explore the root of one's emotional problems or to take up exercise.

3. THE CAUSES OF DISEASE

As explained above, the main causes of disease considered are the following:

- a) Heredity
- b) Emotions
- c) Overwork
- d) Diet
- e) Climate
- f) Traumas
- g) Drugs, including immunizations
- h) Excessive sexual activity

a) Heredity

The constitutional body condition inherited from our parents depends on three factors:

1. The parents' health in general
2. The parents' health at the time of conception
3. The conditions of the mother's pregnancy

Any of these factors can affect the body condition and become a cause of disease later in life. If the parents' Qi and Essence are weak, the child's resulting Pre-Heaven Essence will also be weak. Similarly, if the mother conceives in later life, this can result in a Kidney or Liver deficiency starting during childhood.

Even though the parents' general health may be good, if it is poor at the time of the child's conception (perhaps through overwork, excessive sexual activity, excessive consumption of alcohol or use of certain medications or drugs such as cannabis or cocaine), this will result in the child having a weak constitution. In this case, the weakness will affect not the Kidneys or Liver, but any of the other organs – that is, the Spleen, Lungs or Heart, depending on what particular condition is negatively affecting the parents' health. For example, if a parent has been overworking at the time of conception, his or her poor health may cause hereditary Spleen

weakness in the child; excessive consumption of alcohol or the use of drugs or certain medicines may cause a hereditary weakness of the child's Heart or Liver.

The mother's condition during the pregnancy can affect the foetus. For example, an accident to the mother can cause headaches later in the child. A shock during pregnancy can cause a baby to cry during sleep or a child to suffer nightmares (this will also manifest with a bluish tinge on the forehead and chin).

The clinical manifestations of a poor constitution in each of a child's organs are indicated below. Possible causes arising during pregnancy for each such constitution will be given, but we must obviously bear in mind that the manifestation may result from a constitutional weakness in one or both parents and not necessarily from what happened during pregnancy.

i) Weak-Spleen constitution

Flaccid muscles alongside the spine, digestive problems, vomiting, diarrhoea, sallow complexion; a quiet child; a thin body or fat if there is Phlegm when a newborn but gets thinner after 1 month.

The cause of a weak Spleen constitution is usually to be found in improper diet or the mother's overworking during pregnancy.

ii) Weak-Lung constitution

White complexion, fearfulness, shyness, prone to colds, whooping cough, asthma, eczema, thin chest, 'special' Lung pulse and Lung cracks on tongue (Fig. 48.2).

In pregnancy, the causes of this constitution are usually emotional upsets to the mother, especially sadness or grief. Of course, smoking during pregnancy also affects the baby's Lungs negatively.

iii) Weak-Heart constitution

Bluish tinge on the forehead, fearful, crying at night, Heart crack on the tongue; a tense child; body hot, red eyes, red cheeks (or opposite, i.e., very pale), red tip of the tongue.

In pregnancy, this constitution may be caused by the mother suffering a shock.

iv) Weak-Liver constitution

Myopia from early age, headaches from early age; a very tense child; sinewy body; nocturnal enuresis, restless sleep, twitching in sleep, screaming during sleep; feeding a lot as a baby, hungry as a child, short-tempered, Wiry pulse and red tongue with coating.

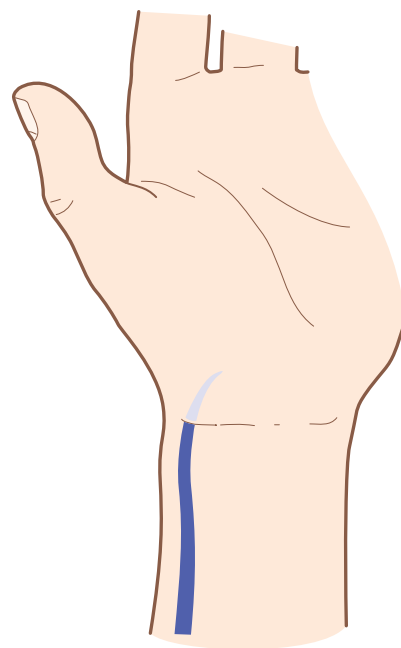


Figure 48.2. Special Lung pulse.

In pregnancy, this constitution may be caused by the mother's emotional stress and anger.

v) Weak-Kidney constitution

Nocturnal enuresis; a listless or timid child; lassitude; thin body, slow development in babyhood; atopic asthma and eczema, headaches from early age, frequent urination and feeling cold.

In pregnancy, this constitution may be caused by the mother overworking.

b) Emotions

Emotions are mental stimuli which influence our affective life. Under normal circumstances, they are not a cause of disease. Indeed, 'emotions' should be more appropriately called 'feelings', and feelings are a natural expression of human life. Without feelings, we would not be human. Hardly any human being can avoid being angry, sad, aggrieved, worried or afraid at some time in his or her life. For example, the death of a relative provokes a very natural feeling of grief. It is only when such feelings take over our life inappropriately and disturb our psyche and body that they become pathological; when this happens, feelings have turned into 'moods'.

Moods often arise precisely when feelings are suppressed; for example, if a certain situation makes us angry and we recognize the anger, we can deal with it and perhaps even come to the conclusion that part of the anger was a projection of our own Shadow. In such cases, the anger is a normal feeling that will probably not have pathological consequences. But if we fail to recognize our anger, this will be driven to deeper levels of our psyche and turn into a 'mood' that possesses us. We 'possess' feelings, but moods possess us.

Thus, emotions (or 'feelings') become causes of disease only when they are excessive, prolonged, suppressed or unrecognized, in which case they turn into moods. For example, hardly anyone can avoid being angry sometimes, but a temporary state of anger does not lead to disease. However, if a person is constantly angry about a certain situation in life for many years, or, even worse, if the anger is not recognized, this emotion will definitely disturb the Mind and Spirit and cause disease.

In Chinese medicine, emotions (the term here signifies causes of disease, not, as normal, feelings) are mental stimuli which disturb the Mind and Spirit and, through these, alter the balance of the internal organs and the harmony of Qi and Blood. For this reason, emotional stress is an internal cause of disease which injures the internal organs directly. On the other hand, and this is a very important feature of Chinese medicine, the state of the internal organs affects our emotional state. For example, if Liver-Yin is deficient (perhaps from dietary factors) and causes Liver-Yang to rise, this may result in a person becoming irritable all the time.

Conversely, if a person is constantly angry about a certain situation or with a particular person, this may cause Liver-Yang to rise.

The 'Spiritual Axis' in [Chapter 8](#) clearly illustrates the reciprocal relationship between the emotions and the internal organs. It says: *'The Heart's fear, anxiety and pensiveness injure the Mind ... the Spleen's worry injures the Intellect ... the Liver's sadness and shock injure the Ethereal Soul ... the Lung's excessive joy injures the Corporeal Soul ... the Kidney's anger injures the Will-Power ...'*¹ On the other hand, further on it says: *'If Liver-Blood is deficient there is fear, if it is in excess there is anger ... if Heart-Qi is deficient there is sadness, if it is in excess there is manic behaviour ...'*² These two passages clearly show that, on the one hand, emotional stress injures the internal organs, and, on the other hand, disharmony of the internal organs causes emotional imbalance.

The emotions taken into consideration in Chinese medicine have varied over the years. From a Five-Element perspective, the *Yellow Emperor's Classic* considered five emotions, each one affecting a specific Yin organ:

1. Anger affecting the Liver
2. Joy affecting the Heart
3. Pensiveness affecting the Spleen
4. Worry affecting the Lungs
5. Fear affecting the Kidneys

However, these are not by any means the only emotions discussed in the *Yellow Emperor's Classic*. In other passages, sadness and shock are added, giving seven emotions:

1. Anger affecting the Liver
2. Joy affecting the Heart
3. Worry affecting the Lungs and Spleen
4. Pensiveness affecting the Spleen
5. Sadness affecting the Lungs and Heart
6. Fear affecting the Kidneys
7. Shock affecting the Kidneys and Heart

Other doctors considered other emotions, such as grief, love, hatred and desire.

Finally, and interestingly, there is one last emotion which is not usually mentioned in Chinese medicine, and that is guilt. Yet, in my opinion, guilt is very pervasive in Western patients and definitely an emotional cause of disease.

Thus, the list of emotions could be expanded as follows:

1. Anger (and frustration and resentment) affecting the Liver
2. Joy affecting the Heart
3. Worry affecting the Lungs and Spleen
4. Pensiveness affecting the Spleen
5. Sadness (and grief) affecting the Lungs
6. Fear affecting the Kidneys
7. Shock affecting the Kidneys and Heart
8. Love affecting the Heart
9. Hatred affecting the Heart and Liver
10. Craving affecting the Heart
11. Guilt affecting the Kidneys and Heart

The effect of each emotion on a relevant organ should not be interpreted too restrictively. There are passages from the 'Yellow Emperor's Classic' that attribute the effect of emotions to organs other than the ones just mentioned. For example, the 'Spiritual Axis' in [Chapter 28](#) says: *'Worry and pensiveness agitate the Heart.'*³ The 'Simple Questions' in [Chapter 39](#) says: *'Sadness agitates the Heart.'*⁴

EMOTIONS

- Anger: Liver
- Joy: Heart
- Worry: Lungs and Spleen
- Pensiveness: Spleen
- Sadness: Lungs and Heart
- Fear: Kidneys
- Shock: Kidneys and Heart

Furthermore, all emotions, besides affecting the relevant organ directly, affect the Heart indirectly because the Heart houses the Mind. It alone, being responsible for consciousness and cognition, can recognize and feel the effect of emotional tension.

Fei Bo Xiong (1800–1879) put it very clearly when he said: *‘The seven emotions injure the 5 Yin organs selectively, but they all affect the Heart. Joy injures the Heart ... Anger injures the Liver, the Liver cannot recognize anger but the Heart can, hence it affects both Liver and Heart. Worry injures the Lungs, the Lungs cannot recognize it but the Heart can, hence it affects both Lungs and Heart. Pensiveness injures the Spleen, the Spleen cannot recognise it but the Heart can, hence it affects both Spleen and Heart.’*⁵

Yu Chang in ‘Principles of Medical Practice’ (1658) says: *‘Worry agitates the Heart and has repercussions on the Lungs; pensiveness agitates the Heart and has repercussions on the Spleen; anger agitates the Heart and has repercussions on the Liver; fear agitates the Heart and has repercussions on the Kidneys. Therefore all the five emotions [including joy] affect the Heart.’*⁶ Chinese writing clearly bears out the idea that all emotions affect the Heart, as the characters for all seven emotions are based on the ‘heart’ radical.

The way that all emotions afflict the Heart also explains why a red tip of the tongue, indicating Heart-Fire, is so commonly seen even in emotional problems related to other organs.

The first effect of emotional stress on the body is to impair the proper circulation and direction of Qi. Qi is non-substantial, and the Mind, with its mental and emotional energies, is the most non-material type of Qi. It is therefore natural that emotional stress affecting the Mind impairs the circulation of Qi first of all.

Each emotion is said to have a particular effect on the circulation of Qi. The ‘Simple Questions’ in [Chapter 39](#) says: *‘Anger makes Qi rise, joy slows down Qi, sadness dissolves Qi, fear makes Qi descend ... shock scatters Qi ... pensiveness knots Qi.’*⁷ Dr Chen Yan in ‘A Treatise on the Three Categories of Causes of Diseases (1174) says: ‘Joy

*scatters, anger arouses, worry makes Qi unsmooth, pensiveness knots, sadness makes Qi tight, fear sinks, shock moves.’*⁸

Again, this should not be taken too literally, as, in certain cases, emotional pressure may have an effect on Qi different from the one outlined above. For example, fear is said to make Qi descend and may cause enuresis, incontinence of urine or diarrhoea, as the Kidneys control the two lower orifices (urethra and anus). This is certainly true in cases of extreme and sudden fear, which may cause incontinence of urine or diarrhoea, or in the case of children when anxiety about a certain family situation may cause enuresis. However, the effect of fear on Qi also depends on the state of the Heart. If the Heart is strong, it will cause Qi to descend, but if the Heart is weak, it will cause Qi to rise in the form of Empty-Heat. This is more common in old people and women. In such cases, fear and anxiety may weaken Kidney-Yin and give rise to Empty-Heat of the Heart with such symptoms as palpitations, insomnia, night-sweating, a dry mouth, red face and a Rapid pulse.

Let us now discuss the effects of each emotion individually.

i) Anger

The term ‘anger’, perhaps more than any other emotion, should be interpreted very broadly to include several other allied emotional states, such as resentment, repressed anger, feeling aggrieved, frustration, irritation, rage, indignation, animosity or bitterness.

Any of these emotional states can affect the Liver, if they persist for a long time, causing stagnation of Liver-Qi or Blood, rising of Liver-Yang or blazing of Liver-Fire. The effect of anger on the Liver depends, on the one hand, on the person’s reaction to the emotional stimulus and, on the other hand, on other concurrent factors. If the anger is bottled up, it will cause stagnation of Liver-Qi, whereas if it is expressed, it will cause Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire blazing. In a woman, stagnation of Liver-Qi may easily lead to stasis of Liver-Blood. If the person also suffers from some Kidney-Yin deficiency (perhaps from excessive sexual activity), he or she will develop Liver-Yang rising. If, on the other hand, the person has a tendency to Heat (perhaps from excessive consumption of hot foods), he or she will tend to develop Liver-Fire blazing.

Anger (intended in the broad sense outlined above) makes Qi rise, and many of the symptoms and signs will manifest in the head and neck, such as headaches, tinnitus, dizziness, red blotches on the front part of the

neck, a red face, thirst, a bitter taste and a Red tongue with red sides.

The 'Simple Questions' in [Chapter 39](#) says: '*Anger makes Qi rise and causes vomiting of blood and diarrhoea.*'⁹ It causes vomiting of blood because it makes Liver-Qi and Liver-Fire rise and diarrhoea because it induces Liver-Qi to invade the Spleen.

Anger does not always manifest outwardly with outbursts of fury, irritability, shouting, a red face, etc. Some individuals may carry anger inside them for years without ever manifesting it. In particular, long-standing depression may be due to repressed anger or resentment. A person who is very depressed may look subdued and pale, walk slowly and speak with a low voice, all signs which one would associate with a depletion of Qi and Blood deriving from sadness or grief. However, when anger rather than sadness is the cause of disease, the pulse and tongue will clearly show it: the pulse will be Full and Wiry, and the tongue will be Red with redder sides and a dry yellow coating. This type of depression is most probably due to long-standing resentment often harboured towards a member of that person's family.

In some cases, anger can affect other organs, especially the Stomach. This can be due to stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Stomach. Such a condition is more likely to occur if one gets angry at meal-times, which may happen if family meals become occasions for regular rows. It also happens when there is a preexisting weakness of the Stomach, in which case the anger may affect only the Stomach without even affecting the Liver.

If one regularly gets angry an hour or two after meals, the anger will affect the Intestines rather than the Stomach. This happens, for example, when one goes straight back to a stressful and frustrating job after lunch. In this case, stagnant Liver-Qi invades the Intestines and causes abdominal pain, distension and alternation of constipation with diarrhoea.

Finally, anger, like all other emotions, also affects the Heart. This is particularly prone to be affected by anger because, from a Five-Element perspective, the Liver is the mother of the Heart, and often Liver-Fire is transmitted to the Heart, giving rise to Heart-Fire. Anger makes the Heart full with blood rushing to it. With time, this leads to Blood-Heat affecting the Heart and therefore the Mind. According to Dr J. H. F. Shen, anger tends to affect the Heart particularly when the person does a lot of jogging or exercising; this is because excessive exercise dilates the heart, which is then more prone to be affected by the transmission of Fire from the Liver to the Heart.

In some cases, anger disguises other emotions, such as guilt. Some people may harbour guilt inside for many years and be unable or unwilling to recognize it; they may then use anger as a mask for their guilt. Moreover, there are some families in which everyone is perpetually angry; this happens more in Mediterranean countries such as Italy, Spain or Greece. In these families, anger is used as a mask to hide other emotions, such as guilt, fear or dislike of being controlled, or to conceal weakness or an inferiority complex. When this is the case, it is important to be aware of this situation as one needs to treat not the anger, but the underlying psychological and emotional condition.

ANGER

- Affects the Liver (and Heart)
- Makes Qi rise
- Expressed anger causes Liver-Yang rising; repressed anger causes Liver-Qi stagnation
- Anger at meal-times affects Stomach
- Anger after eating affects Intestines
- Anger may disguise guilt

ii) Joy

A normal state of joy is not in itself a cause of disease; on the contrary, it is a beneficial mental state that favours a smooth functioning of the internal organs and their mental faculties. The 'Simple Questions' in [Chapter 39](#) says: '*Joy makes the Mind peaceful and relaxed, it benefits the Nutritive and Defensive Qi and it makes Qi relax and slow down.*'¹⁰ On the other hand, in [Chapter 2](#) the 'Simple Questions' says: '*The Heart ... controls joy, joy injures the Heart, fear counteracts joy.*'¹¹

What is meant by 'joy' as a cause of disease is obviously not a state of healthy contentment but one of excessive excitement and craving, which can injure the Heart. This happens to people who live in a state of continuous mental stimulation (however pleasurable) or excessive excitement: in other words, a life of 'hard playing'.

As indicated above, inordinate craving is an aspect of the emotion 'joy,' and it stirs up the Minister Fire, which over-stimulates the Mind.

Joy, in the broad sense indicated above, makes the Heart larger. This leads to excessive stimulation of the Heart, which, in time, may lead to Heart-related symptoms and signs. These may deviate somewhat from the classic Heart patterns. The main manifestations would

be palpitations, over-excitability, insomnia, restlessness and talking a lot; the tip of the tongue would be red. The pulse typically would be slow, slightly Overflowing but Empty on the left Front position.

Joy also may be marked out as a cause of disease when it is sudden; this happens, for example, on hearing good news unexpectedly. In this situation, 'joy' is akin to shock. Fei Bo Xiong in 'Medical Collection from Four Families from Meng He' says: *'Joy injures the Heart ... [it causes] Yang Qi to float and the blood vessels to become too open and dilated.'*¹² In these cases of sudden joy and excitement, the Heart dilates and slows down and the pulse becomes Slow and slightly Overflowing but Empty. One can understand the effect of sudden joy further if one thinks of situations in which a migraine attack is precipitated by the excitement of suddenly hearing good news. Another example of joy as a cause of disease is that of sudden laughter triggering a heart attack; this example also confirms the relationship existing between the Heart and laughter.

JOY

- Affects the Heart)
- Makes Qi slow down
- Joy is a state of excessive excitement and/or craving
- Joy makes the heart larger

iii) Worry

Worry is one of the most common emotional causes of disease in our society. The extremely rapid and radical social changes that have occurred in Western societies in past decades have created a climate of insecurity and anxiety in all spheres of life. Of course, there are also people who, because of a preexisting disharmony of the internal organs, are very prone to worry, even about very minor incidents in life.

For example, many people appear to be very tense and worry a lot. On close interrogation about their work and family life, often nothing of note emerges. They simply worry excessively about trivial everyday activities and tend to do everything in a hurry and be pressed for time. This may be due to a constitutional weakness of the Spleen, Heart or Lungs or a combination of these.

Worry knots Qi, which means it causes stagnation of Qi, and it affects both the Lungs and the Spleen: the Lungs because when one is worried, breathing is shallow, and the Spleen because this organ is responsible for

thinking and ideas. Worry is the pathological counterpart of the Spleen's mental activity in generating ideas.

In a few cases, worry also may affect the Liver as a result of the stagnation of the Lungs: in a Five-Element sense that corresponds to Metal insulting Wood. When this happens, the neck and shoulders will tense up and become stiff and painful.

The symptoms and signs caused by worry will vary according to whether they affect the Lungs or the Spleen. If worry affects the Lungs, it will cause an uncomfortable feeling in the chest, slight breathlessness, anxiety, tensing of the shoulders, sometimes a dry cough and a pale complexion. The right Front pulse position (of the Lungs) may feel slightly Tight or Wiry, indicating the knotting action of worry on Qi.

If worry affects the Spleen, it may cause poor appetite, a slight epigastric discomfort, some abdominal pain and distension, tiredness and a pale complexion. The right Middle pulse position (Spleen) will feel slightly Tight but Weak. If worry affects the Stomach as well (which happens if one worries at mealtimes), the right Middle pulse may be Weak-Floating.

WORRY

- It affects the Lungs, Heart and Spleen.
- It knots Qi.
- It may also affect the Liver.
- It affects breathing and the Corporeal Soul (Po).

iv) Pensiveness

Pensiveness is very similar to worry in its character and effect. It consists in brooding, constantly thinking about certain events or people (even though not worrying), nostalgic hankering after the past and generally thinking intensely about life rather than living it. In extreme cases, pensiveness leads to obsessive thoughts. In a different sense, pensiveness also includes excessive mental work in the process of one's work or study.

Pensiveness affects the Spleen and, like worry, it knots Qi. It will therefore cause symptoms similar to those outlined above. The only difference will be that the pulse of the right side not only will feel slightly Tight, but will have no wave. One can feel the normal pulse as a wave under the fingers moving from the Rear towards the Front position. The pulse without wave lacks this flowing movement from Rear to Front position and instead is felt as if each individual position were separate from the others (see Fig. 50.1). In the case of pensiveness,

the pulse will lack a wave only on the right Middle position. A pulse without wave in the Front and Middle position indicates Sadness.

PENSIVENESS

- It affects the Spleen and Heart.
- It knots Qi.
- In severe cases it leads to obsessive thoughts.
- 'Pensiveness' also includes excessive mental work.

v) Sadness and grief

Sadness includes the emotion of regret, as when someone regrets a certain action or decision in the past and the Mind is constantly turned towards that time. Sadness and grief affect the Lungs and Heart. In fact, according to the 'Simple Questions', sadness affects the Lungs via the Heart. It says in [Chapter 39](#): *'Sadness makes the Heart cramped and agitated; this pushes towards the lungs' lobes, the Upper Burner becomes obstructed, Nutritive and Defensive Qi cannot circulate freely, Heat accumulates and dissolves Qi.'*¹³

According to this passage, then, sadness primarily affects the Heart, and the Lungs suffer in consequence because they are both situated in the Upper Burner. The Lungs govern Qi, and sadness and grief deplete Qi. This is often manifested on the pulse as a Weak quality on both left and right Front positions (Heart and Lungs). In particular, the pulse on both Front positions is Short and has no wave: it does not flow smoothly towards the thumb. Other manifestations deriving from sadness and grief include a weak voice, tiredness, pale complexion, slight breathlessness, weeping and a feeling of oppression in the chest. In women, deficiency of Lung-Qi from sadness or grief often leads to Blood deficiency and amenorrhoea.

Although sadness and grief deplete Qi and therefore lead to deficiency of Qi, they may also, after a long time, lead to stagnation of Qi, because the deficient Lung- and Heart-Qi fail to circulate properly in the chest.

As mentioned before, each emotion can affect other organs apart from its 'specific' one. For example, the 'Spiritual Axis' in [Chapter 8](#) mentions injury of the Liver from sadness rather than anger: *'When sadness affects the Liver it injures the Ethereal Soul; this causes mental confusion ... the Yin is damaged, the tendons contract and there is hypochondrial discomfort.'*¹⁴ This shows how organs can be affected by emotions other than the one 'specific' to them. In this case, sadness can naturally affect the Ethereal Soul and therefore Liver-Yin. Sadness has a

depleting effect on Qi and therefore in some cases depletes Liver-Yin, leading to mental confusion, depression, lack of a sense of direction in life and inability to plan one's life.

Finally, some doctors consider that grief which is unexpressed and borne without tears affects the Kidneys. According to them, when grief is held in without weeping, the fluids cannot come out (in the form of tears) and upset the fluid metabolism within the Kidneys. This would happen only in situations in which grief had been felt for many years.

SADNESS AND GRIEF

- They affect the Lungs and Heart.
- They deplete Qi.
- In time, they may also lead to stagnation of Qi.
- Sadness also may affect Liver-Blood in women.
- Unexpressed grief without tears affects the Kidneys.

vi) Fear

'Fear' includes both a chronic state of fear and anxiety, and a sudden fright. It depletes Kidney-Qi and makes Qi descend. The 'Simple Questions' in [Chapter 39](#) says: *'Fear depletes the Essence, it blocks the Upper Burner, which makes Qi descend to the Lower Burner.'*¹⁵ Examples of Qi descending are nocturnal enuresis in children and incontinence of urine or diarrhoea in adults, following a sudden fright.

Situations of chronic anxiety and fear will have different effects on Qi depending on the state of the Heart. If the Heart is strong, it will cause Qi to descend, but if the Heart is weak, it will cause Qi to rise in the form of Empty-Heat. This is more common in women and old people of either sex, as fear and anxiety weaken Kidney-Yin and give rise to Empty-Heat of the Heart with such symptoms as palpitations, insomnia, night-sweating, a dry mouth, a malar flush and a Rapid pulse.

If a person has a tendency to a constitutional weakness of the Heart (manifested with a midline crack on the tongue extending all the way to the tip), fear will affect the Heart rather than the Kidneys.

There are other causes of fear, not related to the Kidneys. Liver-Blood deficiency and a Gall-Bladder deficiency also can make the person fearful.

FEAR

- It affects the Kidneys and Heart.
- It makes Qi descend (in theory).
- In my opinion, it may also make Qi ascend.

vii) Shock

Mental shock scatters Qi and affects the Heart and Kidneys. It causes a sudden depletion of Heart-Qi, makes the Heart smaller and may lead to palpitations, breathlessness and insomnia. It is often reflected in the pulse with the Moving quality – that is, a pulse that is short, slippery, shaped like a bean, rapid and gives the impression of vibrating as it pulsates.

Shock also ‘closes’ the Heart or makes the Heart smaller. This can be observed in a bluish tinge on the forehead and a Heart pulse which is Tight and Fine.

Shock also affects the Kidneys because the body draws on the Kidney-Essence to supplement the sudden depletion of Qi. For this reason, shock can cause such symptoms as night sweating, a dry mouth, dizziness or tinnitus.

SHOCK

- Affects Kidneys, Spleen and Heart
- Suspends Qi
- Makes the heart smaller

viii) Love

It may seem strange to include ‘love’ under emotional causes of disease, and yet all ancient Chinese books (including non-medical ones by Daoist and Confucianist writers) always had ‘love’ at the top of the list of emotions, just after joy and anger.

‘Love’ here means not normal love, such as that of a mother towards her child or that between two lovers, but rather the condition when love becomes an obsession or when it is misdirected, as when a person loves someone who persistently hurts him or her. In this context, ‘love’ indicates a rather obsessive love for a particular person, a misdirected emotion focussing on someone who persistently hurts the lover, whether physically or mentally, or narcissistic love. Obsessive jealousy would fall under this broad category. In these senses, love becomes a cause of disease.

‘Love’ in the sense outlined above affects the Heart and quickens Qi. This will be felt on the left Front position (Heart) with an Overflowing quality, and the pulse will also be rapid. It may cause such symptoms and signs as palpitations, a red tip of the tongue, a red face, insomnia and mental restlessness.

‘LOVE’

- Affects the Heart
- Quickens Qi
- Consists in:
 - Obsessive love
 - Misdirected love (towards a person who hurts us)
 - Jealousy and possessiveness
 - Narcissistic love

ix) Hatred

Hatred is quite similar to anger but differs from it insofar as it indicates a ‘cold’ and calculating malice rather than the uncontrollable and spontaneous outbursts that are typical of anger. When harboured for many years, hatred is a very damaging and destructive emotion. It affects the Heart and Liver and knots and slows down Qi. It can be felt on the pulse of the left-hand side with a Wiry but Slow quality. The symptoms and signs caused by hatred include chest pain, hypochondriac pain, insomnia, headache and palpitations. These manifestations include pain in some part of the body, as when hatred is felt for many years it turns inwards to injure only the person himself or herself.

HATRED

- Affects the Liver and Heart
- Similar to anger
- Knots and slows down Qi

x) Craving

‘Desire’ means excessive craving. The inclusion of this as a cause of disease reflects the Buddhist influence on Chinese medicine, which began during the Tang dynasty. The ultimate cause of disease according to Buddhist thought is desire – that is, clinging to external objects or other people and always wanting more. This excessive craving, which is one aspect of the emotion of ‘joy’ in Chinese medicine, causes the Minister Fire to blaze upwards and harass the Mind. By this is meant a state of constant craving which is never satisfied. This can include craving for material objects or recognition.

Craving affects the Heart and scatters Qi. Craving also affects the Pericardium by stirring the Minister Fire. In disease, Minister Fire refers to a pathological Empty Fire arising from the Kidneys; it affects the Pericardium and therefore the Mind.¹⁶ If the Mind is calm, settled and content, the Pericardium follows its direction and there is a happy and balanced life.

If the Mind is weak and dissatisfied, the Pericardium follows the demands of the craving and the person constantly desires new objects or new marks of recognition, which, however, even when attained, are never satisfying and leave the person more frustrated. It is for these reasons that Daoism, Confucianism and Buddhism put the emphasis on reducing craving to prevent the arousal of Minister-Fire, which stirs the Mind.

Craving will cause Heart-Fire or Heart Empty-Heat depending on the underlying condition of the person. If there is a tendency to Yin deficiency, which is common in people who tend to overwork, it will lead to Heart Empty-Heat. This will cause palpitations, a malar flush, a dry throat, insomnia and mental restlessness.

CRAVING

- Affects the Heart and Pericardium
- Scatters Qi
- Akin to 'joy'

xi) Guilt

Guilt is an extremely common emotion and a cause of disease in the West. A feeling of guilt may derive from the transgression of social or religious taboos or from having done something wrong which is later regretted. People who are prone to blame themselves for everything that goes wrong also may suffer an unjustified and subjective sense of guilt.

Guilt affects the Heart and Kidneys and causes Qi to either stagnate or sink. It may cause stagnation of Qi in the chest, epigastrium or abdomen, and its clinical manifestations include an uncomfortable feeling in the chest, epigastric or abdominal pain and distension and a Fine pulse. The tongue will have a red tip, and the pulse will be vibrating as it pulsates. The eyes will look unstable and often flap shut while a person is talking.

If it affects the Kidneys, guilt may cause Qi to sink, giving rise to urinary problems such as a slight incontinence, dribbling of urine and a bearing-down feeling in the hypogastrium.

In some cases, guilt also may arise from the repression of anger. When anger is repressed and not recognized, it may turn inwards and cause an attitude of self-punishment and guilt. When guilt results from repressed anger, the pulse will be Wiry.

GUILT

- Affects the Kidneys and Heart
- May cause sinking or stagnation of Qi

c) Overwork

By 'overwork' I mean not physical work but the habit of working long hours every day without adequate rest and usually accompanied by irregular eating for many years. As stated earlier, someone who 'overworks' leaves home perhaps at 7 in the morning, catches a train to work, works under stressful conditions through the lunch hour (eating a sandwich at the desk) and returns home at about 9 in the evening. When such a routine is carried out for many years, it constitutes what I call 'overwork'. It is an extremely common cause of disease in Western patients, about which they need to be educated. Most people who follow such a routine at work are surprised when I suggest to them that they work too much and that their working habits might have something to do with their illness.

Overwork as defined above is probably the most common cause of Yin deficiency in the patients we see. It depletes primarily Kidney-Yin but also Liver- and Stomach-Yin, depending on the circumstances. In women, it is likely to injure Liver-Yin as well as Kidney-Yin; on the other hand, when overwork is associated with an irregular diet (as it often is), it injures Stomach-Yin.

d) Diet

Diet influences our health in two main ways: first through our choice of foods and second through our eating habits.

i) Choice of foods

Our choice of foods can become unbalanced in four main ways: eating too much cold food, eating too much hot food, eating too much greasy food and not eating enough.

Eating too much cold food

'Cold' food includes raw fruit, raw vegetables and cold drinks. Patients are often surprised to be told that an excessive consumption of such foods might be detrimental, as this advice runs counter to the prevailing view of 'healthy' eating – that is, eating lots of fruit and salads in order to secure the maximum intake of vitamins

and minerals. It is true that raw foods are rich in vitamins and minerals and a small consumption of such foods is not detrimental and is indeed healthy. It becomes detrimental from the point of view of Chinese medicine only when the mainstay of someone's diet is exclusively raw fruit and vegetables.

Excessive consumption of cold foods (including cold drinks) injures the Spleen and leads to internal Cold in the body. This will cause a pale complexion, loose stools, tiredness, feeling cold and abdominal pain.

Eating too much hot food

'Hot' foods include red meat (especially lamb, beef and game), spices and alcohol. Excessive consumption of hot foods causes Heat in the internal organs and will manifest with a red complexion, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, mental restlessness and a Red tongue.

Eating too much greasy food

'Greasy' foods include all dairy foods, bananas and peanuts. In addition, this category includes foods cooked in animal fats and fried or deep-fried foods. Sugar is also a 'greasy' food.

Greasy foods lead to the formation of Dampness and/or Phlegm, and an excessive consumption of such foods is extremely common in Western countries, especially in the United States and Northern European countries.

Not eating enough

In affluent countries, 'not eating enough' is due to following a restrictive diet, often aimed at slimming, and also may result from following a vegetarian diet injudiciously, especially in women. Many young girls become vegetarian, and, not having a good knowledge of combining food, they tend to eat a lot of salads and cheese, which injure the Spleen and lead to Dampness. Such girls will tend to be pale and suffer from tiredness, digestive problems, loose stools and menstrual problems; the tongue will be Pale and the pulse Choppy.

ii) Eating habits

Chinese medicine places the stress not only on the range of foods eaten but also, and as important, on the way that we eat. We may eat a very balanced diet with exclusively organic foods, but if our eating habits are chaotic, this will lead to disease.

Chinese medicine stresses the importance of routine and regularity in one's diet. It also stresses the

importance of having a short break after eating at lunchtime. Unfortunately, most people who work full-time have very irregular eating habits, which may include any of the following:

- Eating in a hurry
- Eating standing up
- Eating at one's desk while working
- Having business lunches
- Eating without routine, for example a very large business lunch one day followed by skipping lunch the next
- Eating late in the evening

Such eating habits injure Stomach-Qi initially and then Stomach-Yin. One of the clearest signs of this, apart from digestive problems, is a tongue with a Stomach crack or scattered Stomach cracks and without coating.

e) Climate

Invasion of external pathogenic factors is an important cause of disease in Painful Obstruction Syndrome (*Bi*). The main external pathogenic factors are Wind, Dampness and Cold. Once in the body, any of these pathogenic factors can turn into or combine with Heat.

Wind is characterized by soreness and pain of muscles and joints and limitation of movement, with the pain moving from joint to joint. In acute cases the pulse would be Floating and slightly Rapid. An important characteristic of Wind is that the pain moves from joint to joint on different days and also may come and go quickly.

Dampness is characterized by pain, soreness and swelling in muscles and joints, with a feeling of heaviness and numbness of the limbs and the pain being fixed in one place and aggravated by damp weather. In acute cases the pulse would be Slow and slightly Slippery.

Cold is characterized by a severe pain in a joint or muscle with limitation of movement, usually unilateral. In acute cases the pulse is Tight.

Heat originates from any of the previous three types when the exterior pathogenic factor turns into Heat in the Interior and gives rise to Painful Obstruction Syndrome. This happens especially with an underlying deficiency of Yin.

Heat is characterized by pain and redness, swelling and heat in the joints (which feel hot to the touch), limitation of movement and severe pain. In acute cases there is thirst, a fever which does not abate after sweating and a Slippery and Rapid pulse.

This syndrome is characterized not just by Heat, but Damp-Heat. In fact, Dampness is the primary aspect of this syndrome and Heat the secondary one.

The diagnosis of external pathogenic factors is based on two main factors: the acute onset of the problem and a sensitivity of pain to weather changes.

f) Trauma

‘Trauma’ here means physical trauma. Accidents cause local stagnation of Qi; if the trauma is severe, it causes local Blood stasis.

The diagnosis of trauma is obvious from the history, except when the trauma occurred several years before and the patient has either forgotten it or not related it to the presenting problem.

If the trauma causes local Blood stasis, this may manifest on the tongue with a single purple spot, which (when compared with points) is relatively large. The tongue also reflects areas of the body, and the location of the purple spot points to the site of the trauma, which may be very old (Fig. 48.3).

Thus, for example, a small purple spot on the right side of the tip may indicate trauma to the right side of the head.

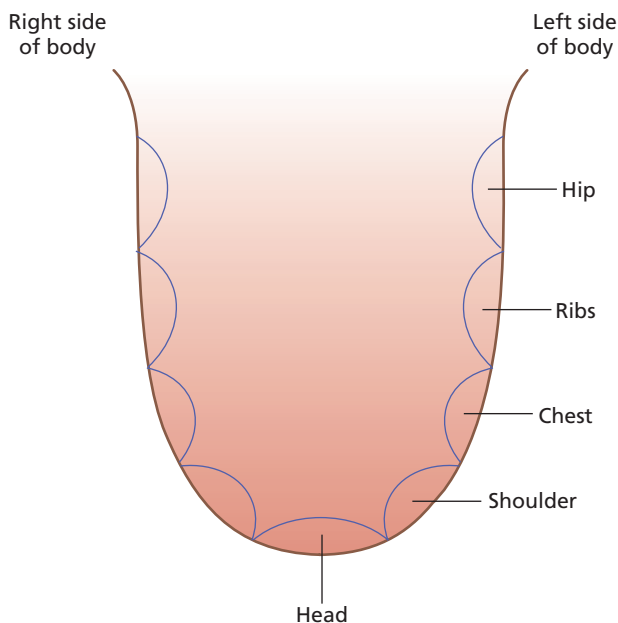


Figure 48.3. Body areas reflected on the tongue.

g) Drugs, including immunizations

Obviously, medicinal drugs are an important cause of disease in Western patients. A discussion of the side-effects of drugs is beyond the scope of this book. It should be noted, however, that with few important exceptions (such as chemotherapy and steroids), the side-effects of drugs are relatively short-lived (once they are stopped) compared with other causes of disease. For example, an antidepressant will have some well-known side-effects, but these will stop when the drug is discontinued and will not cause lasting damage.

It is different with the other causes of disease, such as heredity, emotional stress or diet. For example, an emotional problem dating back to a person's childhood will have long-lasting effects even after the person has recognized the problem and taken steps to face it and resolve it. Likewise, if a person eats irregularly for some years, the effects of this may be very long-lasting, even a considerable time after he or she has rectified his or her diet.

As for immunizations, in my opinion they lead to the formation of Latent Heat. Latent Heat is formed when a pathogenic factor invades the body without causing apparent symptoms; the pathogenic factor penetrates the Interior, turns into Heat and 'lurks' in the Interior for some time. Over time (usually weeks or months), the Heat emerges in the form of Latent Heat with symptoms such as sudden weariness, tired limbs, insomnia, thirst, irritability, red tongue and Rapid pulse. It should be stressed that the fact that the Latent Heat emerges does not mean it is being expelled but simply that it is manifesting after lurking in the Interior for some time.

In order to understand the effect of immunizations, we need to refer to the theory of the Four Levels. According to this theory, an external pathogenic factor invades the body, passing through four energetic levels: the Defensive-Qi, Qi, Nutritive-Qi and Blood levels.

The Defensive-Qi level is an exterior level – that is, at this stage the pathogenic factor is on the Exterior of the body. At the Qi level, the pathogenic factor turns into interior Heat. The three levels, Qi, Nutritive-Qi and Blood, are all interior and all characterized by interior Heat but at three different energetic layers, Qi being the most superficial and Blood the deepest. With an immunization, it is as if the 'pathogenic factor' (i.e., the vaccine) were injected directly at the Blood level. Once there, it 'lurks', turns into Heat and emerges later as Latent Heat.

It is of course impossible to prove, but my impression is that many modern autoimmune diseases, some cancers (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) manifest as Latent Heat, and their growing incidence may be partly due to immunizations.

h) Recreational drugs

The ill effects of 'recreational' drugs such as cocaine, heroin, lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), Ecstasy and others are well known. However, so-called 'soft' drugs such as cannabis also have a profound impact on our health. Regular smoking of cannabis over a long period has definite neurological actions on the brain, affecting memory and concentration negatively.¹⁷ It is my experience that these effects are permanent in long-term users even after they stop using the drug. Long-term use of the drug also may cause loss of brain substance; cannabis also impairs cell division by lymphocytes in tissue culture.¹⁸

In my experience, long-term users display a certain lack of centredness, a weak Stomach and Spleen and a weak *Zhi* (Will-Power) of the Kidneys.

i) Excessive sexual activity

By 'sexual activity' I mean ejaculation in men and orgasm in women. Excessive sexual activity may weaken the Kidneys because sperm is a direct emanation of the Kidney-Essence (sexual activity not culminating in ejaculation does not deplete the Kidneys). It is difficult to define what is 'excessive' because it depends on the age and health of the person. A very rough guide to the recommended frequency of ejaculation in healthy men is to divide the man's age by 5, for example every 8 days in a 40-year-old man. It should be stressed that this period should be extended if the man is in poor health and especially if he suffers from a Kidney deficiency.

Excessive sexual activity weakens the Kidney-Essence and may cause backache, dizziness, tinnitus, poor memory and concentration and weak knees.

I have so far referred to men deliberately because, in my opinion, the effect of sexual activity in women is quite different from that in men. Sperm in men is an emanation of the Kidney-Essence; the equivalent in women is menstrual blood or eggs in the ovaries. Sperm and menstrual blood/eggs constitute the 'Tian Gui' essence, which arrives at puberty. Quite simply, men

lose sperm during orgasm but women do not lose menstrual blood or eggs; therefore, sexual activity and orgasm in women are not weakening to the Kidneys.

A cause of disease in women equivalent to excessive ejaculation in men would be a heavy loss of blood after childbirth or a heavy monthly blood loss in a woman suffering from menorrhagia. Some people say that the increased fluid lubrication in the vagina during sexual arousal and orgasm is equivalent to ejaculation in men. I tend to disagree with this view because, in my opinion, such fluids are part of Body Fluids rather than an emanation of the Kidney-Essence.

Finally, it should be mentioned that lack of sexual activity also may be a cause of disease but only when sexual desire is present. If sexual desire is totally absent, then lack of sexual activity has no health repercussions. Sexual desire makes the Minister Fire rise upwards, and with orgasm this Fire is discharged downwards. When sexual desire is unfulfilled, the Minister Fire rises up without being discharged during orgasm and affects the Heart, causing Heart-Fire of stagnation of Heart-Qi.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- There are often at least two of the following interacting causes of disease: heredity, emotions, overwork, diet, climate, trauma, medicinal and recreational drugs and excessive sexual activity.
- It is helpful to divide the patient's life into five stages: childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age and old age.
- The manifestations of weak Spleen, Lung, Heart, Liver and Kidney constitutions are inherited from parents.
- All emotions affect the Heart as well as a specific organ; the emotions to be considered are anger, joy, worry, pensiveness, sadness, grief, fear, shock, love, hatred, craving and guilt.
- Inadequate rest from work may deplete the Yin of several organs.
- Excessive cold or hot foods may cause internal Cold or Heat, respectively, whereas greasy food leads to Phlegm and/or Damp formation.
- Regularity of eating and focused eating habits are important.
- Invasion of external pathogenic factors is particularly relevant in Painful Obstructive Syndrome (*Bi*).
- Once stopped, the side-effects of most drugs are short-lived.
- Excessive sexual activity refers to ejaculation in men and orgasm in women.

END NOTES

1. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 24.
2. Ibid., p. 24.
3. Ibid., p. 67.
4. Simple Questions, p. 221.
5. Fei Bo Xiong et al 1985 Medical Collection from Four Families from Meng He (*Meng He Si Jia Yi Ji* 孟河四家医集), Jiangsu Science Publishing House, Nanjing, p. 40.
6. Principles of Medical Practice, cited in Wang Ke Qin 1988 Theory of the Mind in Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Shen Zhu Xue Shuo* 中医肾主学说), Ancient Chinese Medical Texts Publishing House, p. 34.
7. Simple Questions, p. 221.
8. Chen Yan 1174 A Treatise on the Three Categories of Causes of Diseases (*San Yin Ji Yi Bing Zheng Fang Lun* 三因极一病证方论), cited in Wang Ke Qin 1988 Theory of the Mind in Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Shen Zhu Xue Shuo* 中医肾主学说), Ancient Chinese Medical Texts Publishing House, p. 55.
9. Simple Questions, p. 221.
10. Ibid., p. 221.
11. Ibid., p. 38.
12. Medical Collection from Four Families from Meng He, p. 40.
13. Simple Questions, p. 221.
14. Spiritual Axis, p. 24.
15. Simple Questions, p. 222.
16. For this reason 'Minister Fire' refers both to the physiological or pathological Fire of the Kidneys and to the Pericardium. This accounts for the assignment of the Right-Rear position on the pulse either to the Kidney-Yang by some doctors, or to the Pericardium by others.
17. D. R. Lawrence 1973 Clinical Pharmacology, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, p. 14.29.
18. Ibid., pp. 14.30 and 14.31.

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PART 3

Diagnosis by
Palpation

Diagnosis by palpation includes palpation of the pulse, chest and abdomen, various parts of the body, channels and points. The two most important parts of diagnosis by palpation are the pulse and the abdomen.

Pulse diagnosis has developed to a very high level of sophistication in Chinese medicine, benefiting from an unbroken, continuous tradition for over 2000 years. The first systematic elements of pulse diagnosis are found in 'The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine'. It is possible that in later centuries (from the Song dynasty onwards, when Confucian morality prevailed) pulse diagnosis was developed in preference to abdominal diagnosis, as it was considered improper for a male physician to palpate the body of a woman.

Diagnosis by palpation of channels and points is very important, especially for acupuncturists, as palpation and needling of tender points merges diagnosis and therapy in one.

The discussion of diagnosis by palpation will be articulated in the following chapters:

[Chapter 49](#): Pulse Diagnosis

[Chapter 50](#): Pulse Qualities

[Chapter 51](#): Palpation of Parts of the Body

[Chapter 52](#): Palpation of Channels

Pulse Diagnosis

49

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*Organ positions on the pulse
Reconciling different pulse arrangements*

The three levels**Method of pulse-taking**

*Time
Levelling the arm
Equalizing the breathing
Placing the fingers*

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Feeling the three positions together first and then individually
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Feeling the pulse quality, strength and level of each individual position by rolling and pushing the fingers
Counting the pulse rate*

Clinical application of pulse diagnosis

*The pulse is often crucial in clinching a diagnosis
The pulse is essential to distinguish deficiency from excess
The pulse is essential to determine the treatment principle
The pulse in emotional problems
The pulse as an indicator of an organ problem
The pulse as an indicator of a heart problem
The pulse does not necessarily reflect all the aspects of a disharmony
The pulse indicates disharmonies beyond the presenting patterns
The pulse can indicate an underlying deficiency in the absence of symptoms
The pulse in cancer*

Integration of pulse and tongue diagnosis

*Qi and Blood
Time factor
When the pulse is rapid and the tongue is not red
When the pulse is slow and the tongue is red
Pulse diagnosis adds detail to tongue diagnosis*

Limitations of pulse diagnosis

*It is subjective
It is subject to short-term influences*

The discussion of pulse diagnosis will be articulated under the following headings:

1. Introduction
2. The 'nine regions' of the pulse from the 'Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic'
3. The pulse in the 'Classic of Difficulties'
4. The three sections of the pulse
5. Assignment of pulse positions to organs
 - a) Organ positions on the pulse
 - i) 'Classic of Difficulties' (*Nan Jing*, AD 100)
 - ii) 'Pulse Classic' (*Mai Jing*, AD 280)
 - iii) 'The Study of the Pulse from Pin Hu Lake' (*Pin Hu Mai Xue*, 1564)

- iv) The 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (*Yi Zong Jin Jian*, 1742)
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 - g) Counting the pulse rate
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 - b) The pulse is essential to distinguish Deficiency from Excess
 - c) The pulse is essential to determine the treatment principle
 - d) The pulse in emotional problems
 - e) The pulse as an indicator of an organ problem
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 - e) Pulse diagnosis adds detail to tongue diagnosis
 - 13. Limitations of pulse diagnosis
 - a) It is subjective
 - b) It is subject to short-term influences
- The pulse qualities are discussed in [Chapter 50](#).

1. INTRODUCTION

Pulse diagnosis is the most difficult of the Chinese diagnostic arts; it is a very complex subject that must involve a deep level of understanding and a great deal of skill and sensitivity. An essential diagnostic tool for all practitioners of Chinese medicine, pulse diagnosis is truly an 'art'; it has more right to that title than any other of the Chinese diagnostic skills. To acquire the skills of good pulse diagnosis requires great patience, and to become proficient and takes years of practice. It is a study that has no end: one will continue to develop one's skills and understanding of pulse diagnosis throughout a lifetime of practice.

What is one feeling when taking the pulse? Basically, we are feeling the pulsation of Qi through the pulsation

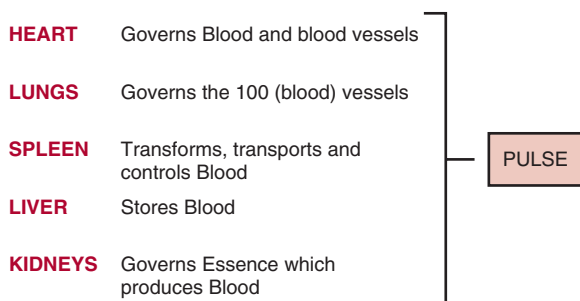


Figure 49.1. Influence of five Yin organs on pulse.

of Blood. Qi is a subtle energy and cannot be ‘felt’ (except by expert practitioners of *Qi Gong*) or ‘measured’. We therefore use the radial artery to feel the pulsation of the blood to give us an idea of the state of Qi. This is made possible by the strong link between Qi and Blood: Qi is the commander of Blood, and Blood is the mother of Qi. Thus, through the pulsation of Blood, we can feel the state of Qi. That we use pulse diagnosis to feel the state of Qi is also shown by the fact that the pulse is felt on the radial artery, where the Lung channel flows, and because the Lungs govern Qi, that particular artery tells us about the state of Qi.

The Heart is the most important organ influencing the pulse: from a Chinese perspective because the Heart governs Blood and from a Western perspective because the pulsation of the pulse derives from the pumping action of the heart. However, apart from the Heart, the other four Yin organs also have a relationship with Blood and therefore the pulse (Fig. 49.1).

Pulse diagnosis is important for two reasons: it helps identify the internal organ (or channels) affected or the prevailing pattern and reflects the whole complex of Qi and Blood.

Su Wen, Chapter 17 (best time to take the pulse)

‘The best time to take the pulse is at dawn during which Yin Qi is not disturbed, Yang Qi has not been consumed, food had not been taken, Main channels are not vigorous, Luo channels are quiet and Qi and Blood are circulating well. So abnormal changes of the pulse can be detected. Apart from examining the changes of the pulse, one should carefully observe the lustre [Jing Ming] of the eyes and inspect the five colours to decide when the 5 Yin Organs are full or empty.’¹

a) The pulse identifies organ and pattern disharmony

Within the general picture of a disharmony, the pulse may be considered a manifestation like any other (e.g., thirst, dizziness, red face). The unique significance of pulse diagnosis, however, is that, by itself, it allows us to diagnose a pattern, even in the absence of other symptoms. For example, dizziness indicates a Kidney deficiency only if it occurs together with other Kidney-deficiency symptoms, such as tinnitus, lower backache and night-sweating. By contrast, a Deep-Weak Kidney pulse on both Rear positions by itself indicates a Kidney deficiency unequivocally.

In addition, the pulse may indicate, by itself, a pattern with some certainty. For example, dizziness may be caused by Phlegm, and in order to diagnose this, it should be accompanied by other symptoms or signs of Phlegm such as a feeling of oppression in the chest, a feeling of muzziness/fuzziness in the head, a Swollen tongue, etc. However, a Slippery pulse by itself indicates Phlegm (excluding, of course, the case of pregnancy).

b) The pulse gives us an idea of the state of Qi and Blood as a whole

Another way in which the pulse differs from other clinical manifestations is that it gives a picture of the body as a whole, of the state of Qi and Blood, of the state of Yin and Yang organs, of the state of parts of the body and of the constitution of an individual. No other clinical manifestation can do that, and only the tongue comes anywhere near doing so.

2. THE ‘NINE REGIONS’ OF THE PULSE FROM THE ‘YELLOW EMPEROR’S INTERNAL CLASSIC’

The practice of feeling the pulse on the radial artery was described in the ‘Classic of Difficulties’ (ca. AD 100); before that, the pulse was taken on nine different arteries, three in the head, three on the hands and three in the legs, as described in Chapter 20 of the ‘Simple Questions’: ‘There are three areas in the body, each area is divided into three which makes nine regions: these are used to determine life and death [i.e., prognosis], and in them, 100 diseases manifest, Deficiency and Excess are regulated and the pathogenic factors can be expelled.’²

Table 49.1 The nine regions of the pulse from the ‘Simple Questions’

Area	Location	Region	Point	Organ or body part	Alternative
Upper	Head	Upper Middle Lower	Tai Yang ST-3 Juliao T.B.-21 Ermen	Qi of head Qi of mouth Qi of ears and eyes	
Middle	Hand	Upper Middle Lower	LU-8 Jingqu L.I.-4 Hegu HE-7 Shenmen	Lungs Centre of thorax Heart	
Lower	Leg	Upper Middle Lower	LIV-10 Wuli KI-3 Taixi SP-11 Jimen	Liver Kidneys Spleen and Stomach	LIV-3 Taichong ST-42 Chongyang

The nine regions are the arteries where the pulse is felt and which reflect the state of the Upper, Middle and Lower Burner. Each of the three areas is divided into three regions identified with Heaven, Person and Earth to indicate Upper, Middle and Lower regions, as indicated in Table 49.1.³

Although this method of taking the pulse on nine different arteries and in nine different places was superseded by that of taking only the pulse of the radial artery, feeling the pulses of the nine regions may still be useful in clinical practice to confirm the emptiness or fullness of a particular area. For example, in a patient suffering from hypertension caused by the rising of Liver-Yang, it may be useful to check the pulses of the upper regions to determine the degree and severity of this pathology (the stronger, harder and fuller the pulses of the upper regions, the more severe the rising of Liver-Yang).

Another example of the use of the pulses of the nine regions is in patients with circulatory problems in the legs. In this case, it may be useful to feel the pulses of the lower regions to establish the degree of severity of this problem (the weaker and emptier the pulses of the lower regions, the poorer the circulation of Qi in the lower legs).

Furthermore, this method may be particularly important if taking the pulse of a patient whose arm or leg has been amputated; in such a case the three pulses of the radial artery of the missing limb may be replaced by the nine regions from the ‘Simple Questions’.

Su Wen, Chapter 20 (nine regions of the pulse)

‘There are Three Regions in the human body and each region has three divisions which are examined to decide

the prognosis of diseases. The Three Regions refer to the Upper, Middle and Lower Region. Each Region has Three Divisions corresponding to Heaven, Earth and Person. Heaven division of the Upper Region refers to the artery on the forehead [Taiyang]; Earth division of the Upper Region refers to the artery near the mouth [ST-3 Juliao]; Person division of the Upper Region refers to the artery in front of the ear [T.B.-21 Ermen]; Heaven division of the Middle Region refers to the artery of Hand Tai Yin [LU-8 Jingqu]; Earth division of the Middle Region refers to the artery of Hand Yang Ming [L.I.-4 Hegu]; Person division of the Middle Region refers to the artery of Hand Shao Yin [HE-7 Shenmen]; Heaven division of the Lower Region refers to Foot Jue Yin [LIV-10 Wuli]; Earth division of the Lower Region refers to Foot Shao Yin [KI-3 Taixi]; Person division of the Lower Region refers to Foot Tai Yin [SP-11 Jimen].’⁴

3. THE PULSE IN THE ‘CLASSIC OF DIFFICULTIES’

The ‘Classic of Difficulties’ (ca. AD 100) established for the first time the practice of taking the pulse at the radial artery; this pulse was variously called *Qi Kou* (‘Portal of Qi’), *Cun Kou* (‘Portal of Inch [Front pulse position]’) and *Mai Kou* (‘Portal of Pulse’). The ‘Classic of Difficulties’ says: ‘The 12 main channels have their own arteries but the pulse can be taken only at the Portal of Inch [LU-9 position] reflecting the life and death of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs ... The Portal of Inch is the beginning and end point of the energy of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs and that is why we can take the pulse at this position only.’⁵

The last part of this statement is interesting, as the description of the pulse of the Portal of Inch is described as the ‘beginning and end point of the energy of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs’ seems to imply an

understanding of the circulation of blood as a closed circuit.

There are two main reasons why the pulse is felt at the 'Qi Portal' position on the radial artery by the wrist in correspondence with the Lung channel. First of all, the Lungs govern Qi, and this channel is therefore the best to gauge the state of Qi in the body. In fact, [Chapter 1](#) of the 'Classic of Difficulties' says: *'Twelve channels have places where a pulse can be felt and yet one selects only the Inch Portal to determine the state of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs, why is this? The Inch Portal constitutes the great meeting place of the vessels, it is the place where the pulse of the Hand Greater Yin [Lungs] beats ... the Inch Portal is the beginning and end of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs and therefore only the Inch Portal is used [for diagnosis].'*⁶

Second, Postnatal Qi and Blood are derived from food and water entering the Stomach. The Stomach extracts the essences of food, which go to the Lungs; from the Lungs, they go to the skin and the five Yin and six Yang organs and to all the arteries in the body – this is a reason why LU-9 Taiyuan is the Gathering (Hui) point of all blood vessels.

The 'Simple Questions' says in [Chapter 11](#):

*'The Yellow Emperor asked: why is it that one can tell the state of the 5 Yin organs only from the Qi Portal? Chi Po replied: the Stomach is the Sea of Food and Drink and the great origin of the 6 Yang organs. The five flavours enter the mouth and are stored in the Stomach which nourishes the Qi of the 5 Yin organs; the Qi Portal is the Greater Yin. The flavours of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs are all derived from the Stomach and then transformed to become visible at the Qi Portal.'*⁷

[Chapter 21](#) of the 'Simple Questions' says:

*'The Qi of food enters the Stomach, Food-Qi goes to the Heart and its refined part enters the vessels, the Qi of the vessels flows into the 12 channels and the Qi of the channels reaches the Lungs. The Lungs govern all vessels and their refined essence goes to the skin and body hair. The body hair and vessels combine together and Qi is transmitted to the 6 Yang organs whose Qi is manifested and nourishes the four Yin organs [apart from the Heart]. When Qi is in balance, the Qi Portal becomes the Inch Portal [i.e., the pulse position] from which the state of the body can be determined.'*⁸

Thus, the section of radial artery on the Lung channel can tell us about the state of Qi and Blood of the whole body.

WHY THE PULSE IS FELT ON THE RADIAL ARTERY (LUNG CHANNEL)

- The Lungs govern Qi.
- The Lungs receive the Food-Qi from the Stomach.

Dr J. H. F. Shen has an interesting further idea why the pulse is felt at the radial artery by the wrist. He compares the blood flowing in the radial artery by the wrist with a sea wave and the metacarpal bone of the thumb with a cliff. Because the wave of blood in the radial artery crashes against the cliff and is pushed back, we can feel the pulse here. If the blood did not encounter this obstacle, it would flow through undeflected, and we would not be able to interpret it in the same way ([Fig. 49.2](#)).

4. THE THREE SECTIONS OF THE PULSE

The three pulse sections are as follows:

Inch	Cun	Front
Gate	Guan	Middle
Foot	Chi	Rear

The second chapter of the 'Classic of Difficulties' explains how its author arrived at feeling the pulse at the three positions called Inch or Front, Gate or Middle and Foot or Rear (Cun, Guan and Chi):

*'The Foot and Inch sections of the pulse are the meeting point of the channels. The distance from the Gate position [LU-8, level with the radial apophysis] to the Foot position in the elbow represents the Foot-Interior and it reflects the Yin energies. The distance from the Gate position to the point Fish Margin [the thenar eminence] is the Foot-Exterior and it reflects the Yang energies. Hence, the distance of 1 inch is separated from the distance of 1 foot [from the Gate position to the elbow crease], so that the distance of 1 foot is represented by 1 inch. Hence the Yin energies are reflected within that one-inch section of the foot-long section and the Yang energies are reflected within a 9-fen [nine-tenths of an inch] section of the Inch section. The total length of the Foot and Inch section extends over 1 inch and 9 fen; hence one speaks of Foot and Inch sections.'*⁹

In other words, the distance from the Gate-Guan (or Middle) position of the pulse (on LU-8 Jingqu) to the crease of the elbow measures 1 Chinese foot and reflects

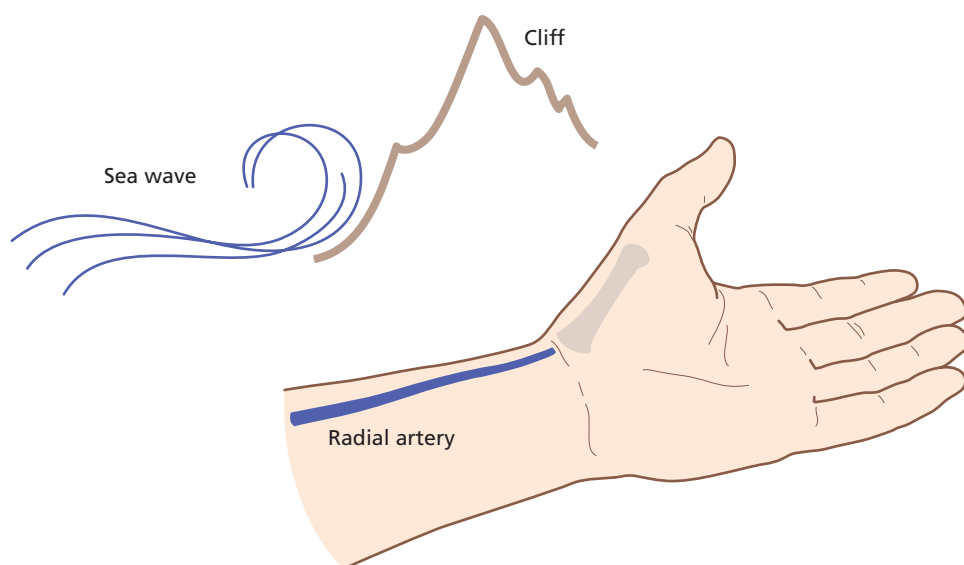


Figure 49.2. The radial artery pulse according to Dr Shen.

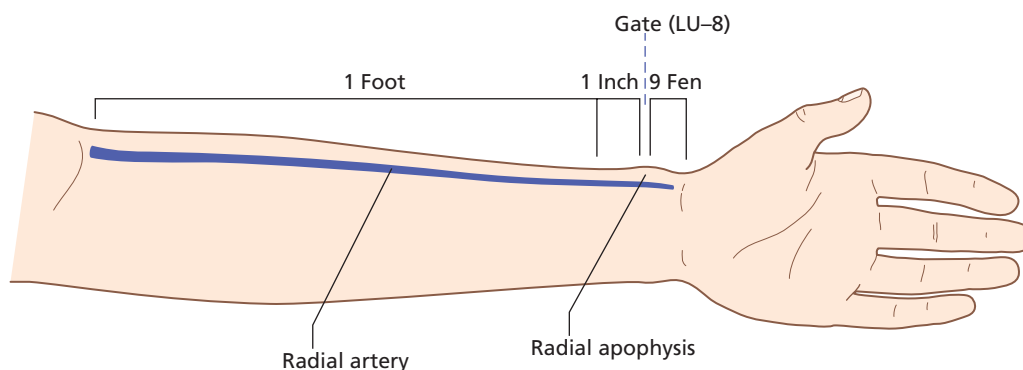


Figure 49.3. Inch, Gate and Foot pulse sections from the 'Classic of Difficulties'.

the Yin energies; the distance from the Gate-Guan position to the crease of the wrist is 9 Fen (nine-tenths of an inch) and reflects the Yang energies. However, a 1-inch section is separated from the 1-foot distance from the Gate-Guan position to the elbow crease to represent the Yin energies; in other words, this 1-inch section is representative of the 1-foot section (Fig. 49.3).

The 'Pulse Classic' says something similar:

'From the Fish Margin [the thenar eminence] to the prominent bone [the radial styloid process] moving one inch backwards [proximally], in the middle of this is the Inch Portal. From the Inch to the Foot, it is called Chi Ze and this position is called Foot. The position behind the Inch and in front of the Foot positions, is called Gate

*position: this is the boundary between the emerging Yang [at the Inch position] and submerging Yin [at the Foot position]. Emerging Yang occupies three divisions [positions] and submerging Yin also occupies three divisions [positions]. Yang originates at the Foot position and moves [or manifests] in the Inch position; Yin originates in the Inch position and moves [or manifests] in the Foot position. The Inch position governs the Upper Burner including the skin and hair up to the hands; the Gate position governs the Middle Burner including the abdomen and back; the Foot position governs the Lower Burner the lower abdomen up to the feet.'*¹⁰

The 'Classic of Difficulties' says in Chapter 3: 'In front [i.e., distal] of the Gate position Yang moves, the pulse here

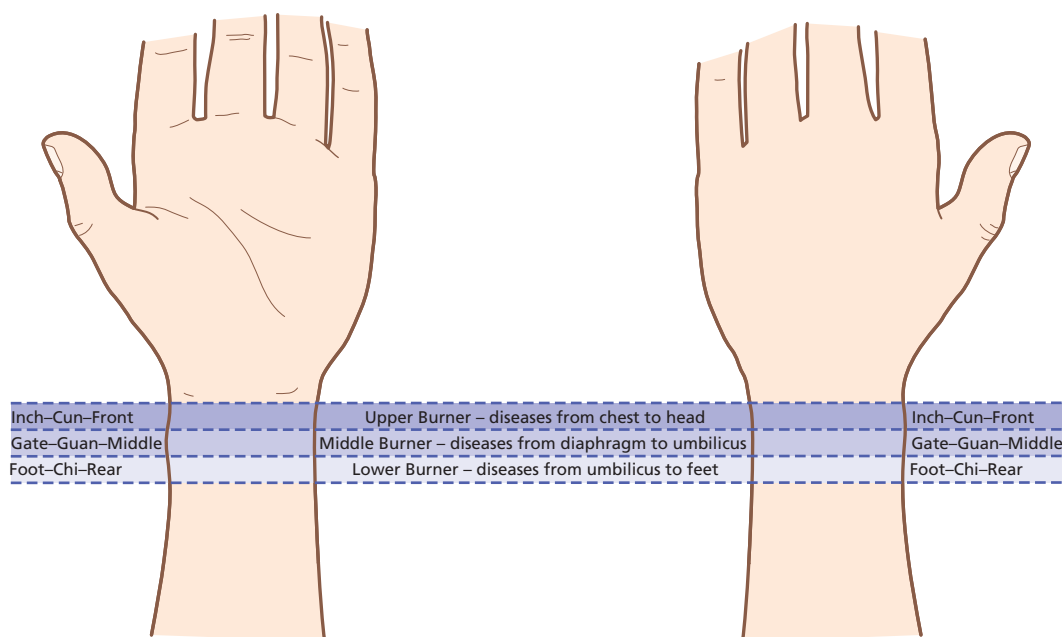


Figure 49.4. Correspondence of three sections to the Three Burners.

is 9 fen long and superficial ... behind [i.e., proximal to] the Gate position Yin moves, the pulse here is 1 cun long and is deep.¹¹

Thus, three sections of the pulse are identified: the Inch-Cun (Front) section reflecting the Yang energies and the Gate-Guan (Middle) section and the Foot-Chi (Rear) section reflecting the Yin energies.

THE THREE POSITIONS OF THE PULSE

- The Inch-Cun (Front) position reflects the Yang energies.
- The Gate-Guan (Middle) and Foot-Chi (Rear) positions reflect the Yin energies.

Three different types of finger pressure are applied to each section, making up the nine regions, which share the same name with but have a different meaning from those of the 'Simple Questions' listed above. This was the revolution brought to pulse diagnosis by the 'Classic of Difficulties': the same information that could be gained by feeling the pulse on nine separate arteries in the head, hands and legs could now be gained by feeling the pulse at the radial artery only.

Chapter 18 of the 'Classic of Difficulties' describes the three different pressures applied to the pulse:

'There are three sections, Inch, Gate and Foot, and three pressures, superficial, middle and deep [which makes]

*9 regions. The Upper section pertains to Heaven and reflects diseases from the chest to the head; the Middle section pertains to Person and reflects diseases from the diaphragm to the umbilicus; the Lower section pertains to Earth and reflects diseases from the umbilicus to the feet. Examine [these sections] before needling.'*¹²

This passage establishes clearly the principle, adopted by all successive doctors, that the Inch section of the pulse corresponds to the Upper Burner and diseases from the chest upwards, the Gate section to the Middle Burner and diseases from the diaphragm to the umbilicus, and the Foot section to the Lower Burner and diseases from the umbilicus to the feet (Fig. 49.4).

5. ASSIGNMENT OF PULSE POSITIONS TO ORGANS

I shall discuss the assignment of pulse positions to organs by examining the various pulse arrangements over the ages and then trying to reconcile the discrepancies between the various arrangements.

a) Organ positions on the pulse

Besides attributing the three sections of the pulse to the Three Burners, Chinese pulse diagnosis goes much

Table 49.2 Assignment of organs to pulse positions by different authors

	LEFT			RIGHT		
	Front	Middle	Rear	Front	Middle	Rear
<i>Nei Jing</i>	Heart <i>Shanzhong</i>	Liver Diaphragm	Kidney Abdomen	Lung Centre of Thorax	Stomach Spleen	Kidney Abdomen
<i>Nan Jing</i>	Heart Small Intestine	Liver Gall-Bladder	Kidney Bladder	Lung Large Intestine	Spleen Stomach	Pericardium Triple Burner
<i>Mai Jing</i>	Heart Small Intestine	Liver Gall-Bladder	Kidney Bladder	Lung Large Intestine	Spleen Stomach	Kidney Bladder/Triple Burner
<i>Pin Hu Mai Xue</i>	Heart	Liver	Kidney	Lung	Spleen and Stomach	Ming Men
<i>Jing Yue Quan Shu</i>	Heart Pericardium	Liver Gall-Bladder	Kidney Bladder/Large Intestine	Lung <i>Shanzhong</i>	Spleen Stomach	Kidney Triple Burner/Ming Men/Small Intestine
<i>Yi Zong Jin Jian</i>	<i>Shanzhong</i> Heart	Gall-Bladder Liver	Bladder/Small Intestine Kidney	Centre of Thorax Lung	Stomach Spleen	Large Intestine Kidney

further in assigning each pulse position to the Qi of a particular organ. Through the centuries, Chinese doctors have disagreed over such assignment, and many different opinions exist. Table 49.2 summarizes the assignment of pulse positions to various organs, according to six representative major classics:

- ‘The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine’ (*Huang Di Nei Jing*), ca. 100 BC
- ‘The Classic of Difficulties’ (*Nan Jing*), ca. AD 100
- ‘The Pulse Classic’ (*Mai Jing*) by Wang Shu He, ca. AD 280
- ‘The Study of the Pulse from Pin Hu Lake’ (*Pin Hu Mai Xue*) by Li Shi Zhen, 1564
- ‘The Complete Works of Jing Yue’ (*Jing Yue Quan Shu*) by Zhang Jing Yue, 1624
- ‘The Golden Mirror of Medicine’ (*Yi Zong Jin Jian*) by Wu Qian, 1742.

It is worth reporting the actual passages concerning the correlation between organs and pulse positions from some of the classics show how such correlation has never been so simple and mechanical as what tends to be taught today – that is, that we feel the ‘Yang organs at the superficial level and Yin organs at the deep level’.

i) ‘Classic of Difficulties’ (*Nan Jing*, AD 100)

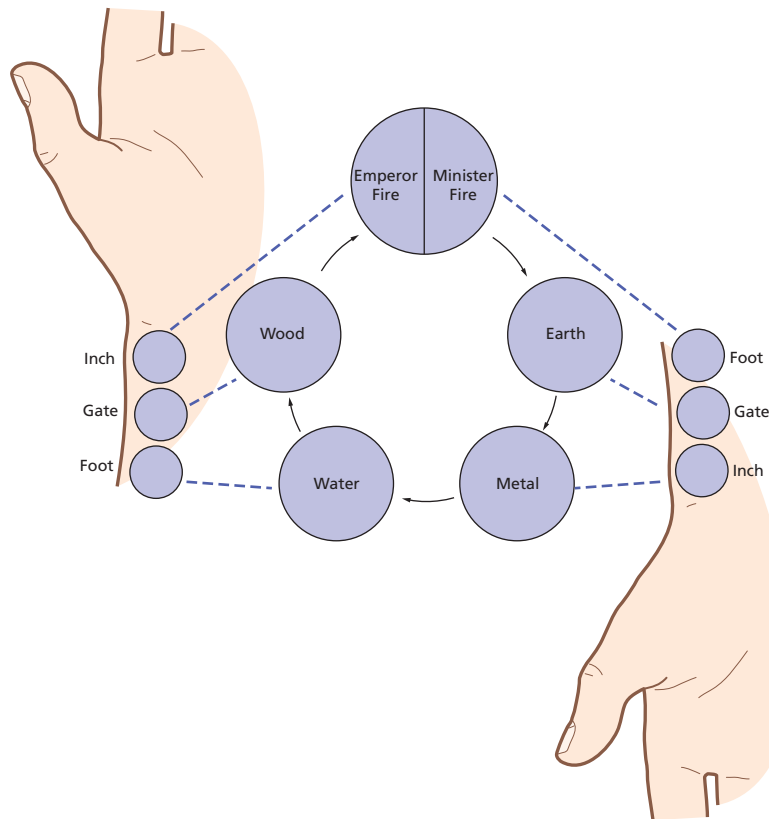
Chapter 18 of the ‘Classic of Difficulties’ explains the correspondence of pulse positions to organs (or channels) in accordance with the Five Elements in a rather complex statement:

‘The Hand Greater Yin [Lungs] and the Hand Bright Yang [Large Intestine] pertain to Metal; the Foot Lesser Yin [Kidneys] and Foot Greater Yang [Bladder] pertain to Water. Metal generates Water, Water flows downwards and cannot ascend. Therefore, these are felt at the position below the Gate position [i.e., Foot position]. The Foot Terminal Yin [Liver] and the Foot Lesser Yang [Gall-Bladder] pertain to Wood; Wood generates the Fire of the Hand Greater Yang [Small Intestine] and Hand Lesser Yin [Heart]. Fire blazes upwards and cannot descend. Hence, the Hand Greater Yang [Small Intestine] and Hand Lesser Yin [Heart] correspond to the position above the Gate [i.e., the Inch position]. The Fire of the Hand Heart Master [i.e., Pericardium] and Lesser Yang [Triple Burner] generates the Earth of Foot Greater Yin [Spleen] and Foot Bright Yang [Stomach], Earth governs the Centre and its position is therefore the central one. This is in accordance with the Five-Element Mother-Child mutual generating and nourishing relationship.’¹³

Thus, the ‘Classic of Difficulties’ assignment of organs to pulse positions follows strictly the Generating cycle of the Five Elements, as follows (Fig. 49.5):

Left	Right
Small Intestine/Heart	Lungs/Large Intestine
Gall-Bladder/Liver	Spleen/Stomach
Bladder/Kidneys	Pericardium/Triple Burner

(a)



(b)

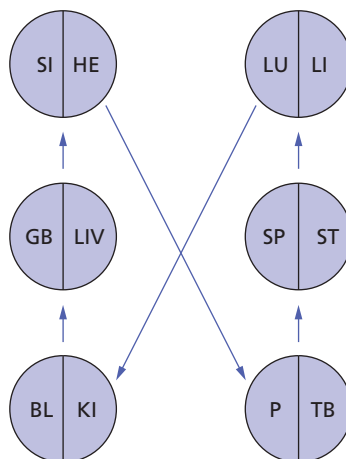


Figure 49.5. (a and b). Five-Element influence on correspondence between organs and pulse position in the 'Classic of Difficulties'.

It is interesting to note that this strict assignment of organs to pulse positions according to the Five Elements and the assignment of the right Foot (Rear) position to the Pericardium and Triple Burner would suggest that the 'Classic of Difficulties' assigns channels rather than organs to the pulse positions. Thus, the arrangement of pulse positions in the 'Classic of Difficulties' is seen clearly from the acupuncturist's perspective rather than the herbalist's, and this would confirm that the two main pulse arrangements – that is, one with the Small Intestine and Large Intestine on the Front (*Cun*) and the other with them on the Rear (*Chi*) position – reflect the different perspectives of the acupuncturist and herbalist, as discussed in more detail below.

ii) 'Pulse Classic' (*Mai Jing*, AD 280)

The 'Pulse Classic' discusses the correspondence of pulse positions to organs (or channels) in [Chapter 7](#). It says:

*'The Heart position is assigned to the left Cun [which is] distal to the Gate position. The Heart is the Hand Lesser Yin and is exteriorly-interiorly related to the Hand Great Yang, i.e. the Small Intestine. The Liver position is assigned to the left gate position. The Liver is the Foot Terminal Yin and is exteriorly-interiorly related to the Foot Lesser Yang, i.e. the Gall-Bladder. The Kidneys position is assigned to the left Foot position which is proximal to the Gate position. The Kidneys are the Foot Lesser Yin which is exteriorly-interiorly related with the Foot Greater Yang, i.e. the Bladder. The Lungs position is assigned to the right Cun position, distal to the Gate position. The Lungs are the Hand Greater Yin and are exteriorly-interiorly related to the Hand Bright Yang, i.e. the Large Intestine. The Spleen position is assigned to the right Guan position. The Spleen is the Foot Greater Yin which is exteriorly-interiorly related to the Foot Bright Yang, i.e. the Stomach. The Kidneys position is assigned to the right Foot position, proximal to the Gate position. The Kidneys are the Foot Lesser Yin which is exteriorly-interiorly related to the Foot Greater Yang, i.e. the Bladder. The Kidneys and Bladder meet in the Lower Burner at a point to the right of Guan Yuan [Ren-4]: to the left of this point are the Kidneys, to the right the Uterus also called Triple Burner.'*¹⁴

The last part of this statement is of note, as it seems to assign both left and right Rear positions to the Kidneys and Bladder, whereas the Rear position reflects also the Uterus and Triple Burner. Most authors translate the end of the above passage as meaning that the left Rear

position corresponds to the Kidneys and the right Rear one to the Uterus and Triple Burner. I think that 'right' and 'left' at the end of the above passage refer to right and left of Ren-4 Guanyuan. In conclusion, the pulse arrangement from the 'Pulse Classic' is:

Left	Right
Small Intestine/Heart	Lungs/Large Intestine
Gall-Bladder/Liver	Spleen/Stomach
Bladder/Kidneys	Kidneys/Uterus/Triple Burner/Bladder

The association between Uterus and Triple Burner is interesting, as it confirms the statement from [Chapter 66](#) of the 'Classic of Difficulties', according to which the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*) stems from the space between the two kidneys (and therefore also the Uterus in women) and spreads to the five Yin and six Yang organs via the intermediary of the Triple Burner.

iii) 'The Study of the Pulse from Pin Hu Lake' (*Pin Hu Mai Xue*, 1564)

'The Study of the Pulse from Pin Hu Lake' assigns only the Yin organs to the pulse positions: *'The Heart and Liver are on the left and Lungs and Spleen on the right. The Kidneys and Gate of life [Ming Men] are at the Foot position on left and right.'*¹⁵

iv) 'The Golden Mirror of Medicine' (*Yi Zong Jin Jian*, 1742)

The 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' by Wu Qian assigns the pulse positions to the organs as follows:

Left	Right
'External'/'Internal'	'Internal'/'External'
Shanzhong/Heart	Lungs/Centre of thorax
Gall-Bladder/Liver	Spleen/Stomach
Bladder, Small Intestine/Kidneys	Kidneys/Large Intestine

[Figure 49.6](#) is a reproduction of the diagram from the original text, and [Fig. 49.7](#) is a translation of the same.¹⁶

The diagram from the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' clearly shows that 'external' and 'internal' mean distal and proximal, respectively; this means that the Yang and Yin organs within each position are felt at the distal and proximal ends, respectively. This is discussed in greater depth below.

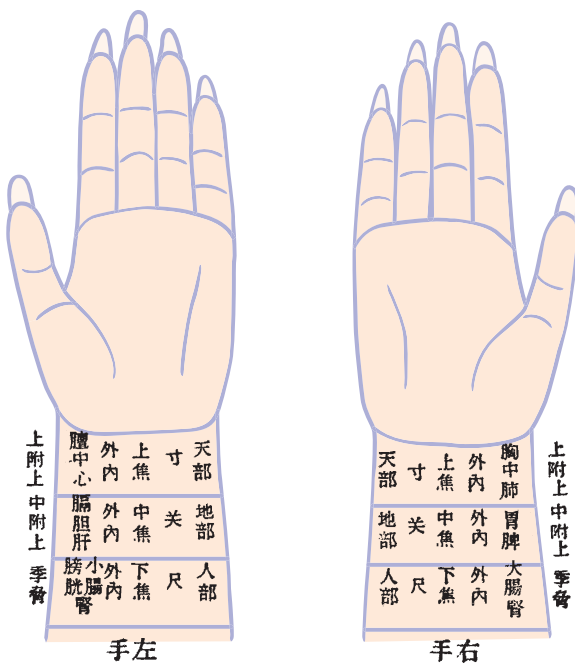


Figure 49.6. Pulse diagram from the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine'.

v) Modern China

The most common pulse assignment in modern China is as follows:

	Left	Right
	'External'/'Internal'	'Internal'/'External'
Front	Pericardium/Heart	Lungs
Middle	Gall-Bladder/Liver	Spleen/Stomach
Rear	Small Intestine/Bladder/ Kidney-Yin	Kidney-Yang/ Large Intestine

Such assignment of pulse positions to organs is something that I have deduced from the various teachers I learned with in China as modern books do not usually present this information in a clear form. This is probably due to the fact that there has been considerable disagreement on this over the centuries, and modern books tend therefore to gloss over this.

For example, 'Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion' of 1987 does not even give any assignment of pulse positions to organs.¹⁷ Other texts often overlook the assignment of the Small and Large Intestine organs, as this is the subject of more disagreement; for example,

the 'Fundamentals of Chinese Medicine' (a translation of a Chinese text) of 1985 says: 'The right inch pulse is associated with the lungs, and the right barrier pulse is associated with the stomach and spleen. The left inch pulse is associated with the heart, and the left barrier pulse is associated with the liver and gall bladder. The kidney and bladder are reflected in both cubit pulses.'¹⁸

b) Reconciling different pulse arrangements

Although different pulse assignments may seem contradictory, there is a common thread running through them. It is generally agreed that the Front (*Cun*) position reflects the Upper Burner, the Middle (*Guan*) position the Middle Burner, and the Rear (*Chi*) position the Lower Burner. Generally, the main discrepancies occur with the assignment of the Yang organs and especially the Small and Large Intestine. Indeed, many doctors do not assign the Yang organs to the pulse at all (the 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine' does not).

i) Yin and Yang organ as reflected on the pulse

The commonly held assumption that the superficial level reflects the state of the Yang organs and the deep level that of the Yin organs has never been the only one in Chinese medicine. In fact, the different levels (or different places) where the Yang and Yin organs are felt are often described as *wai* (external) and *nei* (internal) and 'external' and 'internal' may be interpreted in three ways:

- 'external' meaning superficial, and 'internal' meaning deep level
- 'external' meaning lateral, and 'internal' meaning medial
- 'external' meaning distal, and 'internal' meaning proximal.

The first interpretation is by far the most common today, but it is important to realize that it is not the only one and also that the three interpretations are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, Dr J. H. F. Shen often uses the second and third interpretations when reading the pulse, which will be discussed later. Figure 49.8 illustrates the three different ways of interpreting 'external' and 'internal'.

In any case, the relationship between Yin and Yang organs as reflected on the pulse needs to be interpreted dynamically and not mechanically: we should not simply assign the superficial level to the Yang organs and the

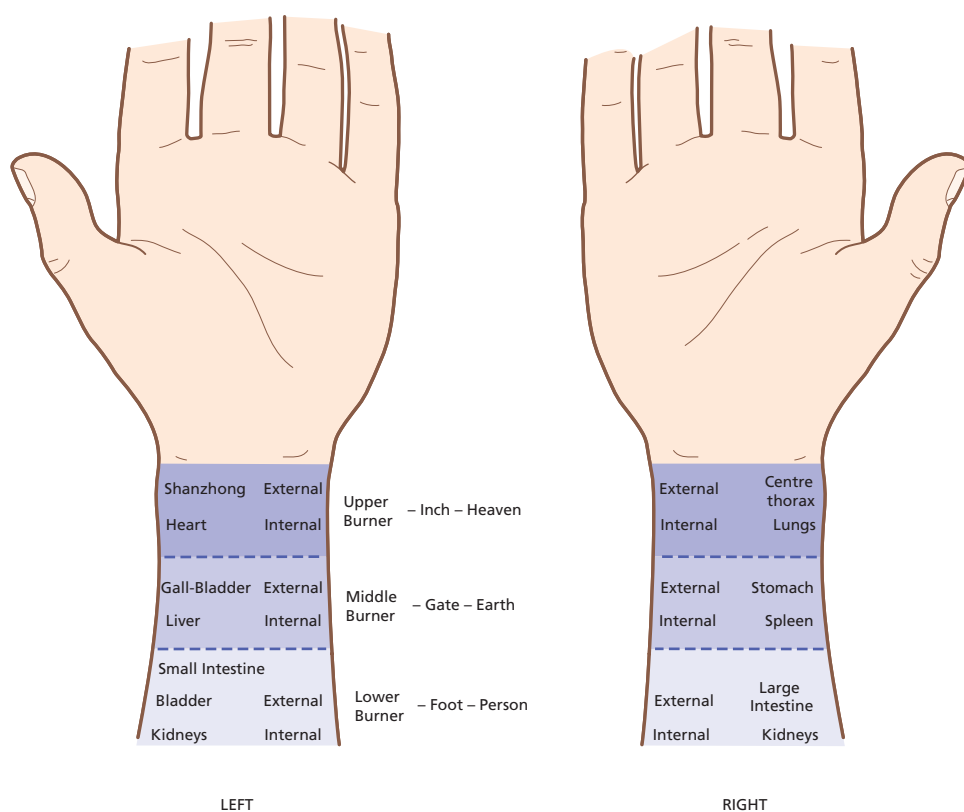


Figure 49.7. Translation of pulse diagram from 'Golden Mirror of Medicine'.

deep level to the Yin ones – for example, on the left-Middle position, Gall-Bladder on the superficial level and Liver on the deep level. As the relationship between the paired Yin and Yang organs is very close (except for the Small Intestine/Heart and Large Intestine/Lung, which will be discussed shortly), each individual pulse position should be first analysed as a whole, paying attention to the intensity and the level of the pulse, rather than mechanically feeling the 'Gall-Bladder' on the superficial level and the 'Liver' on the deep level as two separate entities.

Each pulse position can reflect different phenomena in different situations. For example, let us consider the left-Middle position (Liver and Gall-Bladder): in a state of health, the Liver and Gall-Bladder will be balanced, or, to put it differently, Yin and Yang within the Liver/Gall-Bladder sphere are balanced. In this case, the pulse will be relatively soft and smooth and not particularly superficial or deep and the Gall-Bladder influence on the pulse will not be felt. But if Liver-Yang is in excess and rises upwards, affecting the Gall-Bladder channel

(causing severe temporal headaches), the rising Qi will be reflected on the pulse, which will be Wiry (harder than normal) and more superficial (it will be felt pounding under the finger). In interpreting this pulse we can say that Liver-Yang is rising or, to put it differently, that the Gall-Bladder Qi is in excess.

ii) The acupuncturist's and herbalist's perspectives in pulse diagnosis

One of the possible explanations for the different pulse arrangements is the therapeutic approach of the practitioner – that is, the acupuncturist or the herbalist. Given that the pulse reflects the Qi of both organ and channel, acupuncturists working on the channels would naturally assign the Small Intestine and Large Intestine to the same positions as the Heart and Lungs, respectively, to which their channels are paired. Herbalists, on the contrary, would give more importance to the internal organs rather than the channels and therefore assign the Small and Large Intestine to the Rear positions – that is, the Lower Burner, where their organs are located.

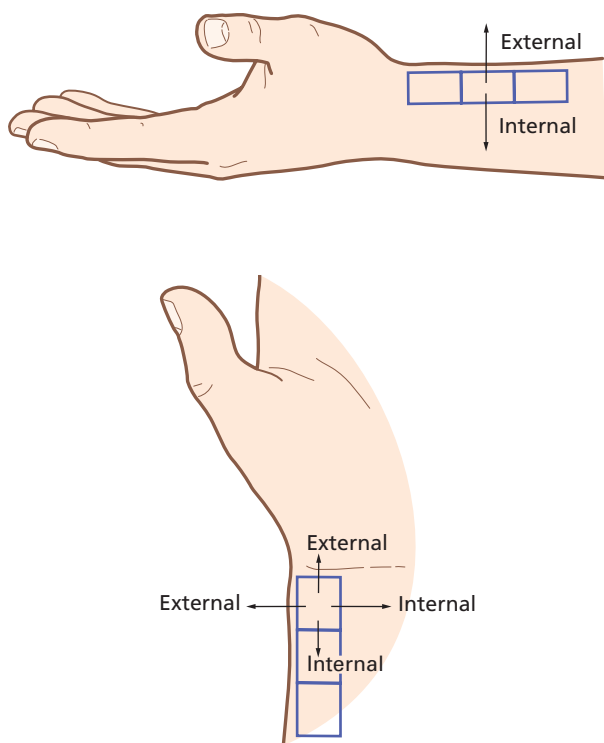


Figure 49.8. Meaning of 'external' and 'internal' in pulse-taking.

iii) Small and Large Intestine channels versus organs in pulse diagnosis

The Small and Large Intestine are probably the subject of the widest discrepancies in pulse diagnosis because they are sometimes placed on the Front and sometimes on the Rear position. This discrepancy may be explained by the fact that the connection between these two organs and their channels is somewhat looser than that of other organs. In fact, the Small and Large Intestine organs are in the Lower Burner while their channels are in the arms (the organs of the Upper Burner have their channels in the arm, whereas the organs of the Middle and Lower Burner have their channels in the legs). Furthermore, the functions of the intestinal organs do not correspond closely to those of their channels; in fact, although the arm points of the Small and Large Intestine can of course be used for intestinal problems, their chief clinical application is to treat problems of the neck, shoulders, face and head as well as external invasions of Wind.

Thus, the same pulse quality in the specific example of the Front position could mean two different things

in different situations. For example, if the right-Front position (Lung) is quite superficial, slightly big and slightly rapid, this could indicate an emotional upset affecting the Lungs. Here, the pulse reflects the state of the Lungs; however, on another occasion exactly the same type of pulse may indicate something quite different – for example, when the patient has an acute, large, purulent tooth abscess. In such a case, the pulse reflects the state of the Large Intestine channel (where the abscess is) rather than a problem with the Lung organ.

On the other hand, problems with the Large Intestine *organ* (rather than channel) more often manifest on the Rear position of the pulse and often on both sides. For example, in patients suffering from ulcerative colitis, the Rear position of both sides is almost always very Wiry, reflecting the Heat and stagnation in the Large Intestine. Thus, from these two examples (tooth abscess and ulcerative colitis) we can see how the contradictory assignments of the Large Intestine to the right-Front and right-Rear positions can *both* be right.

iv) Clinical significance of pulse diagnosis irrespective of organ positions

We should not make too much of the different pulse positions assumed by different doctors, and we should not view the relationship between pulse positions and organs mechanically. In fact, it would be perfectly possible to make a good, clinically significant pulse diagnosis without referring to the internal organs at all. This is because the pulse gives us an idea of the relative strength of Qi in the Three Burners, at the three levels and on left and right sides.

The pulse essentially reflects the state of Qi in the different Burners and at different energy levels, which are dependent on the pathological condition. We need to interpret the pulse dynamically rather than mechanically. The most important thing is to appraise how Qi is flowing; what is the relationship between Yin and Yang on the pulse (i.e., is there deficiency or excess of Yin or Yang); at what level is Qi flowing (i.e., is the pulse superficial or deep); whether the body's Qi is deficient and whether there is an attack by an exterior pathogenic factor.



The pulse gives us clinically relevant information, even without reference to organ positions.

v) Clinical interpretation of the pulse in acute versus chronic conditions

The clinical relevance of the assignment of pulse positions to organs differs in acute and chronic conditions. In acute conditions, especially in fevers, after operations, during infections, etc., the assessment of the individual pulse positions is somewhat less important than that of its overall quality and rate. For example, if a person suffers a severe invasion of Wind, the pulse will be Floating in all the positions and, of course, this does not indicate a pathology in each of the organs corresponding to those positions.

vi) The pulse as a reflection of Heart-Qi

Although each pulse position can be assigned to a particular internal organ or channel, we should not lose sight of the fact that the pulse as a whole reflects the state of Heart-Qi and Heart-Blood: the Heart governs Blood and the blood vessels, and it is therefore natural that a disharmony of the Heart may reflect on the pulse *as a whole*. The influence of the Heart on the pulse as a whole is particularly manifest when the pulse is extremely Weak, Fine or Choppy, or, conversely, Overflowing, in all positions, and also when it is very Slow or very Rapid.

Furthermore, any irregularity of the pulse (Knotted, Hasty, Hurried, Intermittent) always indicates a Heart disharmony, whatever the other internal organs that may be involved. Frequently, but by no means always, the above pulse qualities may indicate not only a Heart disharmony in the Chinese sense but possibly also a heart problem in a Western sense. For example, a congenital heart defect may manifest with one of the above qualities.

The clinical significance of pulse diagnosis in heart problems is discussed further below.



Independent of positions, the pulse as a whole reflects Heart-Qi.

6. THE THREE LEVELS

When feeling the pulse, one should apply three different pressures to feel three different levels of energy: the superficial level is felt with a very light pressure and corresponds to Qi, Yang and the Yang organs; the deep level is felt with a heavy pressure and corresponds to Yin and the Yin organs; the middle level is felt in between

Table 49.3 Correspondence of three levels of the pulse to Yang and Yin energies by Li Shi Zhen

Level	Energy	Yin or Yang	Organs
Superficial	Qi/Yang	Yang organs	Lungs and Heart
Middle	Blood		Stomach and Spleen
Deep	Yin	Yin organs	Liver and Kidneys

the two levels with a moderate pressure and corresponds to Blood.

The clinical significance of the three levels is summarized in [Table 49.3](#).

The correlation that relates the superficial level to Qi and Yang, the middle level to Blood and the deep level to Yin is clinically important. This distinction is, after all, implicit in many of the pulse qualities. For example, when we say that a pulse is Weak, we mean that it is weak at the superficial level and it therefore indicates deficiency of Yang. When we say that a pulse is Floating-Empty, we mean that it is weak at the deep level and therefore indicates Yin deficiency. When we say that a pulse is Hollow, we mean that it is empty at the middle level and it therefore indicates deficiency of Blood.

The above three examples all refer to a deficiency of energy at the three levels; of course, the pulse also can be too strong at each of those levels. For example, a Floating pulse is too superficial and therefore indicates 'Excess of Yang', which may be external (as Wind is a Yang pathogenic factor) or internal; a Firm pulse is by definition full, strong and hard at the middle, and deep levels and may therefore indicate Blood stasis; and a Deep and Full pulse indicates the presence of a pathogenic factor in the Interior and therefore in the Yin energy. The clinical significance of the strength of the pulse at each level is summarized in [Table 49.4](#), which also indicates the pulse qualities corresponding to each level.

Another way of interpreting the three levels is that given by Li Shi Zhen, who correlates the superficial, middle and deep levels with the energy of Lungs and Heart, Stomach and Spleen, and Liver and Kidneys, respectively (see [Table 49.3](#)). This means that, according to his theory, the whole of the superficial level (irrespective of positions) reflects the state of the Lung and Heart, the whole of the middle level reflects the state of the Stomach and Spleen, and the whole of the deep level (irrespective of position) reflects the state of the Liver

Table 49.4 Clinical significance of the pulse strength at the three levels

Level	Weak	Strong
Superficial	Yang or Qi deficiency (Deep, Weak, Soggy, Hidden)	Excess of Yang, invasion of external pathogenic factor (Floating, Big, Overflowing, Wiry)
Middle	Blood deficiency (Choppy, Leather, Hollow, Scattered)	Blood Heat or Blood stasis (Firm, Wiry, Slippery, Big, Overflowing)
Deep	Yin deficiency (Floating-Empty, Leather, Scattered)	Internal Cold or internal Heat, stasis in the Yin organs (Deep, Full, Slippery, Wiry, Firm, Tight)

and Kidneys; this thinking is certainly clinically useful, especially when the pulse displays the same quality in all positions. For example, if the pulse is Empty at the deep level in all positions, we can certainly deduce that there is a deficiency of Yin of the Liver and Kidneys. This does not mean, of course, that other organs may not have Yin deficiency, but if, say, there were a deficiency of Yin of the Lungs, the pulse would be empty at the deep level only in the Lung position. The idea that the three different levels can be correlated to the energy of different organs is actually very old and is present in both the 'Classic of Difficulties' and the 'Pulse Classic'.

The 'Pulse Classic' (Mai Jing) says:

*'Initially one should apply the pressure [equivalent to] 3 soya beans and [this level corresponds to] skin and hair and to the energy of the Lungs; with the pressure equivalent to 6 soya beans, it corresponds to blood vessels and the energy of the Heart; with the pressure equivalent to 9 soya beans it corresponds to the muscles and the energy of the Spleen; with the pressure equivalent to 12 soya beans it corresponds to the sinews and the energy of the Liver; finally, pressing down to the bone and then releasing the pressure, if the pulse comes fast, it corresponds to the energy of the Kidneys.'*¹⁹

Wang She He (author of the 'Pulse Classic') obviously relied here on the description in the 'Classic of Difficulties', which has a passage that is almost identical in Chapter 5.²⁰

It should be noted that some pulse qualities (Wiry, Slippery, Big, Overflowing, etc.) manifest, of course, at more than one level.

7. METHOD OF PULSE-TAKING

There are four aspects to the method of taking the pulse:

- a) Time
- b) Levelling the arm
- c) Equalizing the breathing
- d) Placing the fingers

a) Time

In theory the best time to take the pulse is in the early morning, when the Yin is calm and the Yang has not stirred yet; it is also the time when the pulse is not affected by work, eating, emotions, etc. The 'Simple Questions' explains why the early morning is the best time to take the pulse: *'Normally the pulse should be taken in the morning when Yin Qi has not stirred yet [not yet decreased after the night], Yang Qi is not yet dispersed [not yet emerged after the night], the patient has not eaten yet, the main channels are not yet full, the Connecting channels are balanced, and Qi and Blood are balanced.'*²¹ Obviously this is not possible in clinical practice, and we should therefore bear in mind the various factors that could affect the pulse in the short term – for example, hurrying at work, hurrying to get to the clinic, having just had a meal or being in a state of hunger, an emotional upset, etc.

b) Levelling the arm

The patient's arm should be horizontal and should not be held higher than the level of the heart. If the patient is lying down, the arm should be resting on the couch; it should *not* be bent, resting on the patient's body (Fig. 49.9). If the patient is sitting, the arm should be resting comfortably on the table. In China, this is the most common way of taking the pulse, using a small soft cushion on which the patient can rest his or her wrist.

c) Equalizing the breathing

Traditionally, equalizing the breathing was necessary to determine whether the pulse was Slow or Rapid, by relating it to the practitioner's breathing cycle. If the patient's pulse beats three times or fewer per practitioner's breathing cycle, it is Slow; if it beats five times or more, it is Rapid. This method is not used today because we can use a watch to count the rate of a pulse; however, 'equalizing the breathing' is still a useful procedure

(a)



(b)

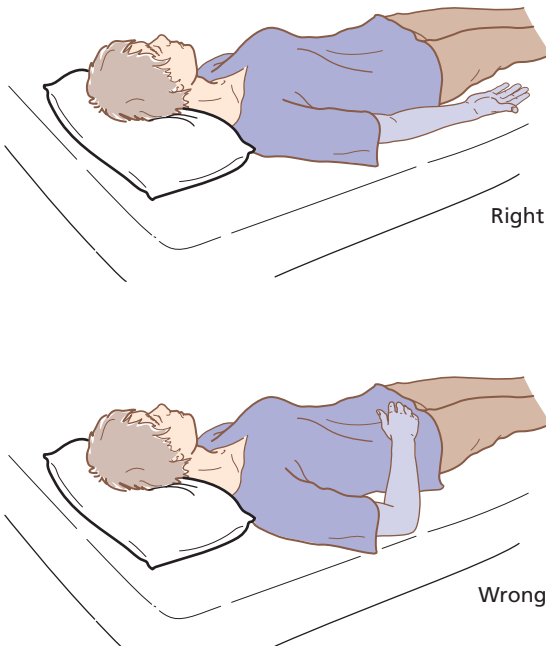


Figure 49.9. Patient's arm position when taking the pulse.

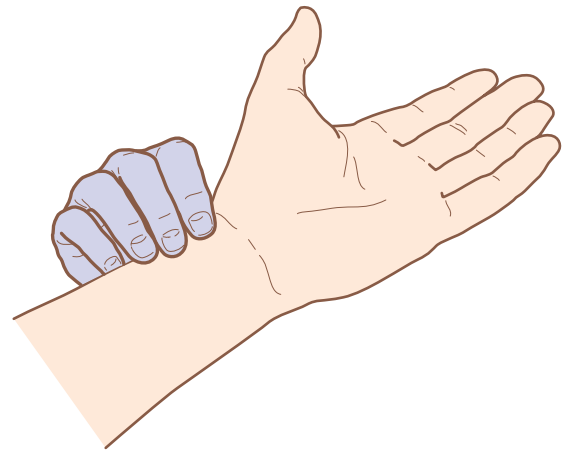


Figure 49.10. Placing the fingers when taking the pulse.

because it facilitates the practitioner's necessary relaxation and concentration.

d) Placing the fingers

Placing the fingers involves five aspects:

- i) Placing the fingers
- ii) Arranging the fingers
- iii) Regulating the fingers
- iv) Using the fingers
- v) Moving the fingers
 - Lifting
 - Pressing
 - Searching
 - Pushing
 - Rolling

i) Placing the fingers

Placing the fingers means the practitioner's three fingers (index, middle and ring fingers) are placed simultaneously on the radial artery to make an initial assessment of the strength, level and quality of the pulse. To assess individual positions, it may be necessary to lift two of the fingers slightly while interpreting the pulse with the third finger. Usually, one feels the pulse of the patient's right arm with one's left hand and vice versa (Fig. 49.10), and the index, middle and ring fingers are placed on the Front, Middle and Rear positions, respectively.

ii) Arranging the fingers

Arranging the fingers means the practitioner should either spread the fingers slightly or press them close together according to the size of the patient's arm. For

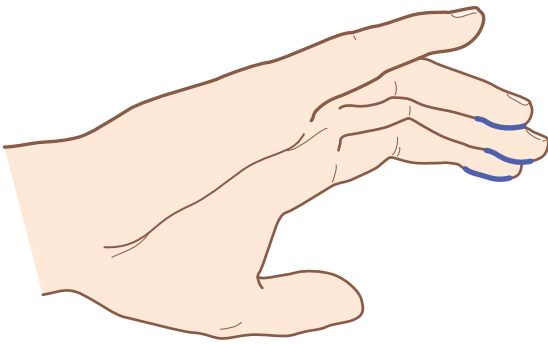


Figure 49.11. Using the pads of the fingers to take the pulse.

example, when feeling the pulse of a 10-year-old child, we should press our fingers closer together to feel the three positions; the younger the child, the closer together our fingers should be, and, in a baby under a year old, we feel the three positions with a single finger (by rolling it proximally and distally to feel the Rear and Front positions, respectively). When taking the pulse of a very tall man, we should spread the fingers out slightly to feel the three positions.

iii) Regulating the fingers

Regulating the fingers means that the practitioner should place the fingertips on the three positions, allowing for the different length of the fingers. In other words, the middle finger, being the longest, is slightly contracted. To feel the pulse, the pads rather than the tips of the fingers are used (Fig. 49.11).

iv) Using the fingers

Using the fingers means the practitioner should bear in mind the subtle difference in sensitivity between the three fingers. Generally, the ring finger is slightly more sensitive than the others, and we should take this into account when comparing the different strengths of the three positions. However, the difference in sensitivity is very small and not too important in clinical practice.

v) Moving the fingers

Moving the fingers means the fingers should be moved in various directions when feeling the pulse. It is a common misconception that the pulse is felt by keeping the fingers absolutely still for a long time; in fact, the fingers are kept still only when counting the rate of the pulse to decide whether it is Slow, Rapid or normal. There are five movements:

- **Lifting** consists of gently lifting the fingers to check the strength of the pulse at the superficial level and

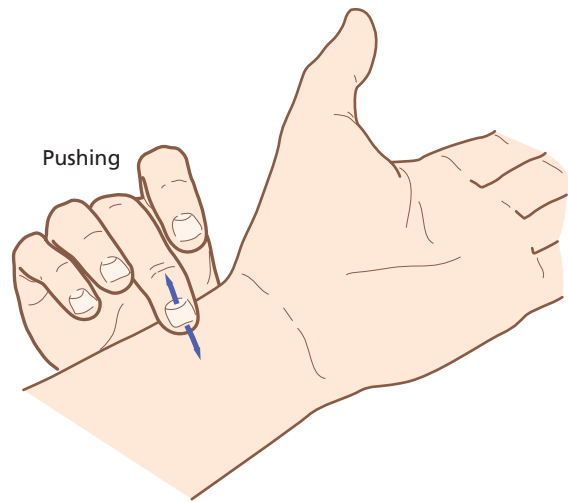


Figure 49.12. Pushing the fingers from side to side.

therefore whether the pulse is Floating, normal or deficient at that level.

- **Pressing** consists of gently pressing the fingers downwards to check the strength of the pulse at the middle and deep levels and therefore whether the pulse is Deep, normal or deficient at these levels; this is necessary to determine whether the pulse is Deep, Hollow, Hidden or empty at the deep level.
- **Searching** consists of not moving the fingers but keeping them still to count the rate of the pulse to decide whether it is Slow, Rapid or normal.
- **Pushing** consists of gently moving the fingers from side to side (lateral-medial) in each position (Fig. 49.12). This movement is necessary to interpret many pulse qualities, such as Slippery, Wiry, Leather, Tight, Choppy, Fine, Minute, etc. One can only identify these pulse qualities by moving the fingers in this way in order to feel *round* the pulse; it is only by feeling round the pulse that we can determine its shape.
- **Rolling** consists of moving the fingers back and forth (proximal-distal) in each position (Fig. 49.13); this movement is necessary to determine whether the pulse is Short, Long or Moving or to read the pulse of a child under 1 year of age.



The pulse is not felt with the fingers totally still but moving the fingers in four ways:

1. Lifting (upwards)
2. Pressing (downwards)
3. Pushing (from side to side)
4. Rolling (proximal-distal)

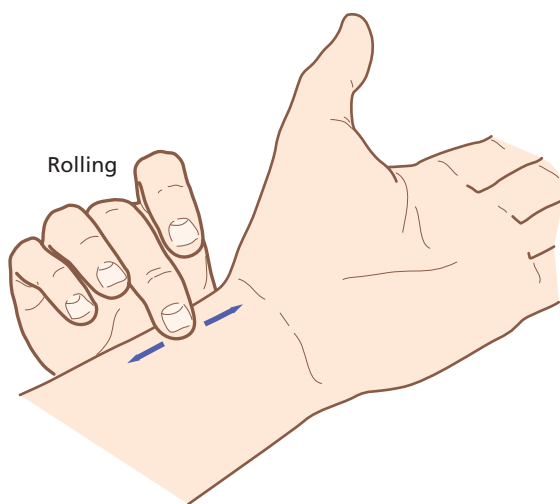


Figure 49.13. Rolling the fingers.

8. FACTORS AFFECTING THE PULSE

There is no such thing as a 'standard' normal pulse. A person's pulse varies according to many factors, all of which should be taken into account.

The following factors affect the pulse:

- Season
- Sex
- Age
- Body-build
- Menstruation
- Pregnancy
- Fan Guan Mai* and *Xie Fei Mai*

a) Season

The pulse varies considerably according to the seasons, becoming relatively Wiry in the spring, Overflowing in the summer, Soft in the autumn and Deep in the winter.

In spring the pulse should be slightly Wiry, straight and relatively Long. It was traditionally described as 'feeling like the tender tip of a bamboo pole'.

In summer the pulse should be more superficial than in other seasons. It should feel round and slightly Slippery, coming forcefully and disappearing quickly. It was traditionally described as feeling like a hook or 'a string of pearls'. In late summer, the pulse should be relatively soft, light and relaxed and was traditionally described as 'feeling like the steps of a chicken'.

In autumn, the pulse should again be relatively soft, superficial, light and relaxed. It was traditionally

described as 'feeling like a group of seedlings sprouting together'.

In winter, the pulse should be deeper than at other seasons and should feel relatively hard and round like a stone.

SEASONAL PULSES

- Spring: slightly Wiry
- Summer: superficial
- Autumn: soft
- Winter: deep

The normal seasonal pulses have been described in slightly different ways in various passages from the classics. The 'Classic of Categories' by Zhang Jing Yue (1624) describes the pulse in springtime as round and Slippery, in summertime as Overflowing and big, in the autumn as Floating and like a hair, and in wintertime as Deep and like a stone.²² It also says that 'In Springtime the pulse is floating like a fish swimming in the waves; in Summertime it is at the skin level, flooding and full; in the Autumn it is under the skin and like a hibernating worm about to move; in Wintertime it is at the level of the bones and like a hidden hibernating worm'.²³

The 'Simple Questions' in Chapter 19 describes the normal seasonal pulses as follows: 'In springtime the pulse is like a bowstring ... in summertime like a hook ... in the autumn floating ... and in wintertime like a storage place'.²⁴

The 'Simple Questions' describes the normal pulses in each season by comparing them with various instruments for measuring, such as a ruler, the carpenter's square, the steelyard arm (the arm of a weighing scale) and the counterpoise weight: 'In springtime the pulse should be like a ruler, in summertime like a [carpenter's] square, in the autumn like the arm of a steelyard and in wintertime like a counterpoise [weight]'.²⁵ The analogy between the seasonal pulses and the measuring instruments highlights the idea of balance and harmony of the pulse with the changing seasons. The modern commentary explains that in springtime the pulse should be light, supple and slippery, in summertime overflowing and relatively rapid, in the autumn superficial and relatively soft like hair, and in wintertime like a stone and deep.

b) Sex

Men's pulses are relatively stronger than women's in general. There are two other differences between men's

and women's pulses. First, the left-side pulse is rather stronger than the right-side pulse in men and vice versa in women: this is only a very slight difference (some authors say it is about 8%). The 'Pulse Classic' (Chapter 7) says: *'The left side [of the pulse] is big in men, the right side is big in women.'*²⁶ Li Shi Zhen also discusses the differences between left and right: *'In men the left pulse should be stronger, in women the right pulse should be stronger.'*²⁷

Second, in men, the Front position is relatively stronger than the Rear one and vice versa in women. The 'Classic of Difficulties' (Chapter 19) says: *'In men the pulse [is found] above the Middle position, in women below the Middle position. Thus, men's pulse is usually weak on the Rear position while women's pulse is strong on the Rear position: this is normal.'*²⁸

Li Shi Zhen says something similar in his book 'The Study of the Pulse from Pin Hu Lake': *'There are differences in the Rear position in men and women: in women, the Yang [i.e., the Front position] is weak and the Yin [i.e., the Rear position] is strong.'*²⁹ Qing dynasty's Chen Jia Yuan says: *'Men have less Yin and more Yang, women have less Yang and more Yin. South corresponds to Fire and man, the two Front pulse positions correspond to South and the original Yang, hence they are big and overflowing while the two Rear positions are weak and soft. Women correspond to North, and so the two Front pulse positions are fine and weak while the two Rear positions are big.'*³⁰

DIFFERENCE IN THE PULSE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

- The left side is slightly stronger in men, the right in women.
- The Front positions are slightly stronger in men, the Rear in women (not verified in my practice).

It is interesting to note that this situation is hardly ever encountered in practice, as women's pulses are more commonly weak on the Rear position, perhaps indicating a decline of hereditary Kidney strength compared with previous generations. In my practice, from a database of more than 2500 patients, I have found that 22% of women have a very weak pulse on both Rear positions, as opposed to 4.6% of men.



Contrary to what the Classics say, the rear positions are usually weaker in women than in men.

c) Age

The pulse varies considerably with age, especially in its rate, being faster in small children and slower in old people (see Chapter 50). Most Chinese books also say that the pulse is naturally weaker in old people: I do not find this to be true in practice, as in many cases the pulse of the elderly is often Full and Wiry. This is because old people frequently suffer from Liver-Wind or Phlegm.

d) Body build

The pulse should naturally be stronger, larger and longer in robust, large people and weaker, smaller and shorter in small, frail people. Thus, a pulse that would be judged to be too weak and short in a robust man might be normal in a small, thin woman. The 'Pulse Classic' says:

*'When diagnosing from the pulse one must take into account whether the patient is large, small, tall or short and whether their nature is placid or nervous. If the pulse, whether slow, rapid, big, small, long or short, accords with the patient's nature, it is normal; if it does not accord with it, it is abnormal. The three pulse positions tend to be of equal size. For example in a small-size person, or a woman, or a thin person the pulse is small and soft.'*³¹

e) Menstruation

In the week preceding the onset of the period, the pulse is slightly Slippery, especially on the right-Rear position. When the period arrives, the pulse loses its Slippery quality and becomes relatively Weak and maybe a bit slower.

f) Pregnancy

The pulse becomes Slippery during pregnancy; this quality is therefore normal in pregnancy. The more advanced the pregnancy, the more Slippery is the pulse. It is also normal for the Front and Rear pulses to become stronger in pregnancy.

g) Fan Guan Mai and Xie Fei Mai

i) Fan Guan Mai

The radial artery is displaced in a small percentage of people (about 5%) so that it lies on the dorsal rather than the inner aspect of the arm (Fig. 49.14). This

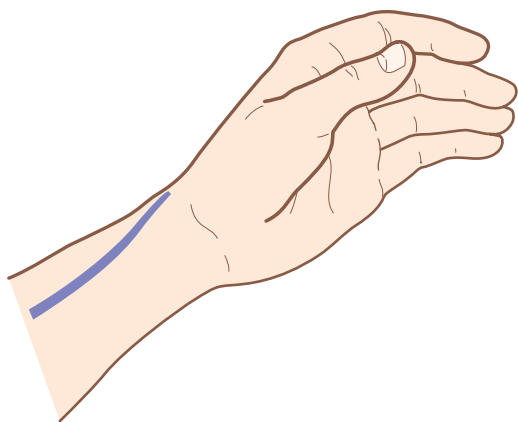


Figure 49.14. *Fan Guan Mai* pulse.

anatomical abnormality was called *Fan Guan Mai* in Chinese, meaning 'pulse on the opposite gate'. In such cases (which usually occur on one side only) one cannot interpret the pulse properly and should refer to the pulses of the nine regions on the head, hands and feet. Thus, whenever the pulse cannot be felt at all or can be felt only very faintly, we should always check the dorsal aspect of the arm to see if the artery is displaced, lest we deduce wrongly that the pulse is very weak and almost nonexistent.

ii) *Xie Fei Mai*

In a few individuals, the pulse runs from the Rear position obliquely towards the Front position. This pulse was called *Xie Fei Mai*, which means Oblique-Flying Pulse. Like the *Fan Guan Mai*, it is due to an irregularity of the radial artery, which makes it difficult to read and interpret the pulse properly.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE PULSE

- Season
- Gender
- Age
- Body-build
- Menstruation
- Pregnancy
- *Fan Guan Mai*

9. ATTRIBUTES OF THE NORMAL PULSE

The normal pulse has three attributes: 'spirit', 'Stomach-Qi' and 'root'.

a) Spirit

The Chinese word used here is *Shen*, which is, of course, used very frequently in the context of diagnosis to indicate a favourable condition, a good prognosis. The word *Shen* is used in the context of tongue, facial and eye diagnosis. In the context of pulse diagnosis, a pulse has 'spirit' when it is soft and gentle but with strength. It also has 'spirit' when it is regular in rate and 'orderly' in quality. A pulse without 'spirit' is too hard, not soft, not gentle, perhaps irregular and maybe also changing quality frequently.

b) Stomach-Qi

The pulse has Stomach-Qi when it is relatively slow (i.e., 4 beats per breathing cycle), gentle, calm and relatively soft.

We feel the pulse on the radial artery along the Lung channel to gauge the state of Qi and Blood of all the organs; however, the Qi of the organs cannot reach the Lung channel without the force of Stomach-Qi. As a Chinese textbook says, '*The food essences enter the Stomach, Food-Qi goes to the Heart and the excess enters the blood vessels. The Qi of the blood vessels flows in the twelve channels which are all under the control of the Lungs.*'³² This means that Lung-Qi reflects the Qi of all the channels and blood vessels, and for this reason we can feel the pulse on the radial artery along the Lung channel, but Lung-Qi relies on the motive force and nourishment of Stomach-Qi to reach channels and blood vessels.

The Stomach has an important influence on the pulse as it is from the Stomach that the motive force for the beating of the Heart comes. Also, the beating of the left ventricle that can be felt below and to the left of the left nipple is, in Chinese medicine, the beating of *Xu Li*, that is, the Great Connecting channel of the Stomach. The Stomach is the Source of Post-Heaven Qi, the Sea of Food, the source of Postnatal Qi and Blood, and it therefore gives 'body' to the pulse; for this reason, a pulse that is not soft, too hard, not gentle and not Slowed-down means that it has no Stomach-Qi.

It is important not to confuse the quality of having 'Stomach-Qi' with the actual Stomach pulse, as the former applies to all pulse positions. Moreover, it is important to stress that 'not having Stomach-Qi' does not necessarily imply a deficiency: 'not having Stomach-Qi' can apply both to Deficient- or Full-type pulses. Thus, for example, a Wiry pulse by definition lacks Stomach-Qi

because it is too hard; conversely, a Soggy pulse also lacks Stomach-Qi because it is too soft.



A pulse may lack 'Stomach-Qi' by being too soft (Empty) or too hard (Full).

c) Root

The normal pulse should have a 'root': this has two meanings. First, it means that the pulse on the Kidney position should be normal; second, the pulse at the deep level (corresponding to Liver and Kidneys in Li Shi Zhen's configuration described above) should be normal. Thus, a pulse 'without root' is either very weak on the Kidney positions or very empty at the deep level.

In a few cases, however, obstruction of the Lower Burner or the Uterus by Cold may cause the Kidney pulse to be very weak or almost imperceptible. This is due to Cold obstructing the Lower Burner and preventing the blood coming through to the Rear position of the pulse; it would be wrong to interpret this pulse as having 'no root' because, once Cold is removed, the Kidney pulse returns to normal. Thus, if the Kidney pulse is very weak, one should always bear in mind the possibility that this might be due to obstruction of the Lower Burner by Cold and check the symptoms and signs to exclude this.

To summarize, the normal pulse has 'spirit', which indicates good Heart-Qi, Stomach-Qi, which indicates good Stomach-Qi, and a root, which indicates good Kidney-Qi; these three aspects correspond to the Three Treasures: Spirit, Qi and Essence (*Jing-Qi-Shen*):

Normal pulse attributes	Organ	Vital substance
Spirit	Heart	Spirit (<i>Shen</i>)
Stomach-Qi	Stomach	Qi
Root	Kidneys	Essence (<i>Jing</i>)

I would add that the normal pulse also has a fourth quality, the pulse having a 'wave'. The normal pulse should have a clear, smooth, wave-like movement from the Rear towards the Front position, which indicates good Stomach- and Heart-Qi. The pulse 'without wave' lacks the smooth, wave-like flow and may be pathological either because it has no wave or because its wave movement is excessively long. Many pulse qualities actually depict a pulse without wave, such as Short, Choppy, Scattered, Weak or Soggy, whereas others depict a pulse with an excessive wave, such as Wiry, Long, Overflowing

or Big. The pulse lacking a wave often reflects the presence of emotional problems due to sadness and grief, and the pulse with an excessive wave often reflects emotional problems due to anger.

Passages from both the 'Pulse Classic' and the 'Classic of Difficulties' seem to describe the attribute of a normal pulse with wave even though they do not mention this word. For example, the 'Pulse Classic' says:

*'The position behind the Inch and in front of the Foot position is the Gate position this is the boundary between the emerging Yang [at the Inch position] and submerging Yin [at the Foot position]. Emerging Yang occupies three divisions [positions] and submerging Yin also occupies three divisions [positions]. Yang originates at the Foot position and moves [or manifests] towards the Inch position; Yin originates in the Inch position and moves [or manifests] towards the Foot position.'*³³

This passage clearly implies the notion of a wave of Qi, in its Yin and Yang qualities, moving in the pulse from the Inch to the Rear and from the Rear to the Inch position (Fig. 49.15).

The 'Classic of Difficulties', in Chapter 3, has a similar concept in a passage that describes the pulse lacking a wave or having an excessive wave:

*'In front of the Gate position, Yang moves and the pulse should extend in 9 fen and be near the surface; if it exceeds 9 fen, it is in excess and if it is shorter than 9 fen, it is deficient ... Behind the Gate position, Yin moves and the pulse should extend to 1 cun and be at the deep level. If it exceeds 1 cun, it is in excess, while if it is less than 1 cun, it is deficient.'*³⁴

This passage essentially describes Long and Short pulse qualities and a pulse having an excessive wave or lacking one, respectively.

ATTRIBUTES OF A NORMAL PULSE

- Spirit: soft, gentle but with strength, regular
- Stomach-Qi: gentle, calm, relatively soft, relatively slow
- Root: normal on the Rear positions and at the deep level
- Wave: pulse with clear, smooth wave from the Rear to the Front position

10. GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING THE PULSE

When taking the pulse, I recommend assessing the aspects in the following order:

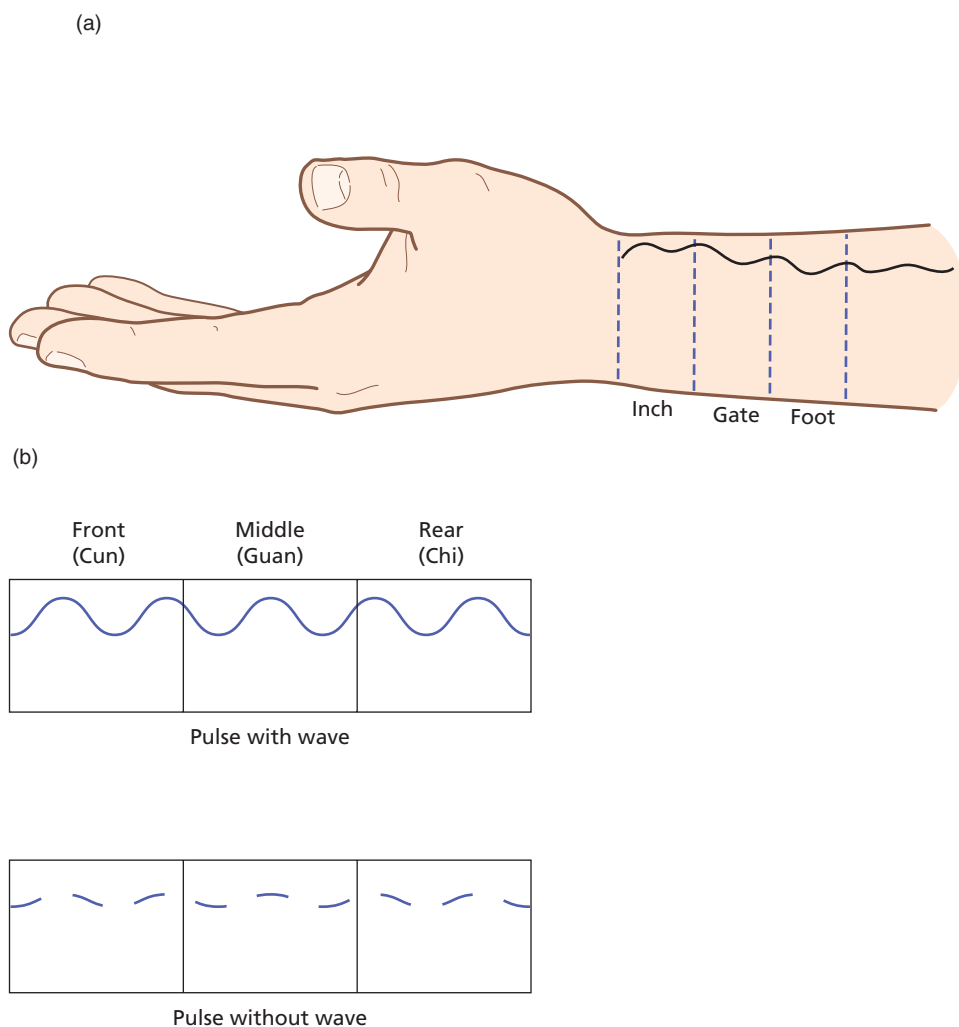


Figure 49.15. Wave-like flow of Qi in the pulse.

- Feel the pulse as a whole with three fingers to get an initial idea of its overall strength or weakness.
- Feel whether the pulse has spirit, Stomach-Qi and root.
- Feel the three positions first with three fingers and then individually by gently lifting two of the fingers and feeling with the third.
- Feel the three levels by constantly lifting and pressing the fingers, searching for them.
- Feel the overall quality of the pulse, if there is one.
- Feel the pulse quality, strength and level of each individual pulse position by rolling and pushing the fingers as described above.
- Count the pulse rate.

It is a good idea to train oneself to assess the above aspects of the pulse in a rational order: for example, when taking the pulse one should never immediately concentrate on a particular quality of a specific organ position without first assessing the pulse as a whole. Each of the above aspects of pulse-taking has its own clinical significance.

a) Feeling the pulse as a whole with three fingers

Feeling the pulse as a whole with three fingers gives us an initial idea of the overall strength or weakness of the pulse; this gives us an initial assessment of the

patient's constitution and the strength of his or her body's Qi. It also enables us to appraise whether the pulse matches the person's body-build.

b) Feeling the spirit, Stomach-Qi and root

Feeling the spirit, Stomach-Qi and root of the pulse gives us an idea of the state of the Mind, Stomach-Qi and Kidneys. Stomach-Qi is particularly important, as it gives us an immediate idea of whether the pulse is normal: any pulse that is either too soft or too hard and full immediately tells us that Stomach-Qi is lacking.

c) Feeling the three positions together first and then individually

Feeling the three positions together first is important to give us an idea of the overall strength or weakness of the pulse and also to compare the relative strength of the left and right pulses. After feeling the three positions together with the three fingers, we should feel each position individually, gently lifting the two of the fingers and feeling with the third. At this stage, this is done not so much to feel the state of the internal organs related to each position but to get an idea of the distribution and balance of Qi among the three positions and therefore Burners.

It is important to remember that the feeling of strength or weakness in the three pulse positions reflects the state and distribution of Qi in the three Burners, irrespective of the individual organs; in other words, we can get a good idea of the strength or weakness of Qi and its 'rebelliousness' (flowing in the wrong direction) by carefully feeling and assessing the flow of Qi in the three pulse positions, initially ignoring the organs associated with those positions. To put it differently, we must remember that the three pulse positions reflect parts of the body as well as organs. The 'Simple Questions' confirms this in [Chapter 17](#) when it says: *'When the upper [position] of the pulse is strong [it means that] Qi is rushing upwards; when the lower [position] of the pulse is strong [it means that] Qi is distended [below].'*³⁵

At this stage, we can get an initial idea of the relative strength of Qi and Blood in the Three Burners. For example, if the pulse is very weak on both Rear positions and relatively overflowing on both Front positions, it may indicate that Qi is rebelling upwards and that this

upwards rebellion is most probably due to a deficiency of Qi and Blood in the Lower Burner so that Qi is not 'anchored' in the Lower Burner and rebels upwards towards the Upper Burner.

d) Feeling the three levels

One feels the three levels by constantly lifting and pressing down the fingers to 'search' for them. It is a good idea to search for the middle level in two different ways: first gently press down from the superficial level, and then press all the way down to the deep level and slowly lift the fingers to stop at the middle level.

Feeling the three levels is essential to give us an idea of the state of Qi/Yang, Blood and Yin and also of the level of Qi in the body. For example, if the pulse is Floating-Empty, it means two things: first that Qi is weak at the deep level and in relative excess at the superficial level and second that there is a Yin deficiency with a relative Yang Excess. These are not two different phenomena but simply two different ways of interpreting the same clinical situation and expressing its pathology.

Integrating the three positions (corresponding to the Three Burners) with the three levels, we form a three-dimensional picture of the Qi in the body in a manner similar to Western medicine practice with computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and positron emission tomography (PET) scans ([Fig. 49.16](#)). This picture is clinically relevant even without referring to the correspondence of positions to organs at all. The relative strength of Qi in each Burner and at each level is clinically significant even without referring to the organs at all, and it is actually a good exercise when reading the pulse not to get too 'fixated' on the assignment of each position to a particular organ. In other words, an assessment of Qi in the three positions and three levels gives us a dynamic picture of the distribution and balance of Qi in the body, which is necessary *before* we analyse each position in its relation to a particular organ.

[Figure 49.17](#) shows how the pulse reflects the energy in the Three Burners, at the three levels and on the left and right sides.

e) Feeling the overall quality of the pulse, if there is one

The next step is to try to feel whether the pulse has an overall quality, remembering that a pulse's 'quality' can

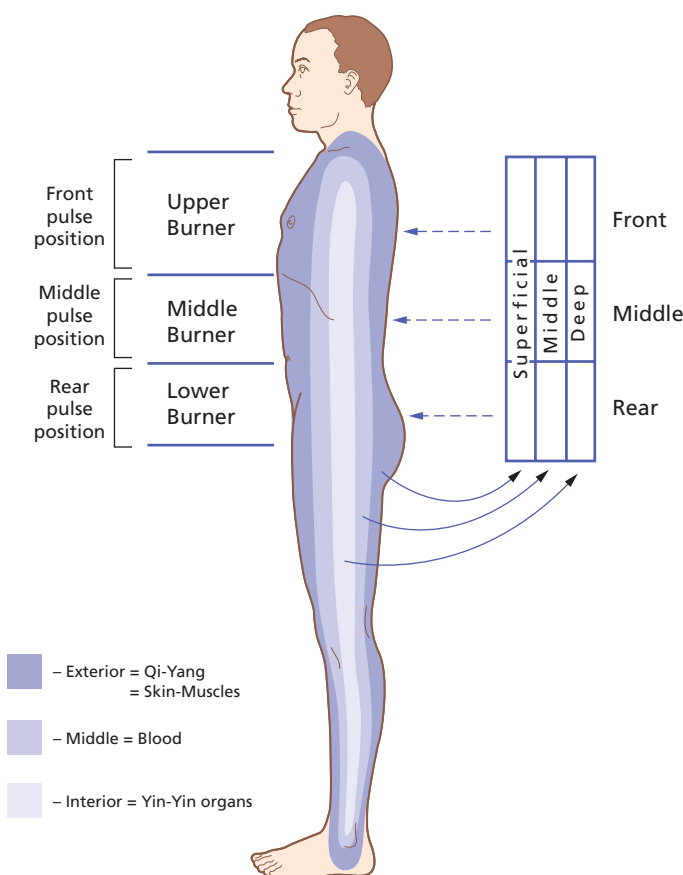


Figure 49.16. Relationship between three positions and Three Burners and between three levels and the three energetic layers.

be felt only by 'rolling' and 'pushing' the fingers as described above. The pulse does not always have an overall quality; for example, it may be slightly Overflowing in the Heart position but very Weak in the Spleen/Stomach position. By contrast, a pulse may feel very clearly and very definitely Wiry in all positions, giving a strong indication of a Liver disharmony (or Phlegm).

If a pulse has a clear, overall quality, it generally means that the disharmony of the patient is fairly simple; for example, if all the pulse positions are Wiry, it indicates a Liver disharmony (or Phlegm) and no other disharmonies. By contrast, if a pulse has several different qualities in different positions, it indicates that the patient suffers from a complex disharmony characterized by both Deficiency and Fullness conditions in various organs.

f) Feeling the pulse quality, strength and level of each individual position by rolling and pushing the fingers

The next step consists in feeling the pulse quality, strength and level of each individual position by gently lifting two fingers while the third concentrates on a particular position. It is important to note that to assess each individual position the finger is constantly moving, searching, exploring the shape and level of pulse by 'rolling' the finger distally and medially, 'pushing' the finger medially and laterally, and 'lifting and pressing' the finger to feel the level of the pulse. Rolling tells us whether the pulse in that position is Short, Long, Choppy, Moving or without wave. Pushing tells us whether the pulse in that position is Choppy, Slippery, Wiry, Weak,

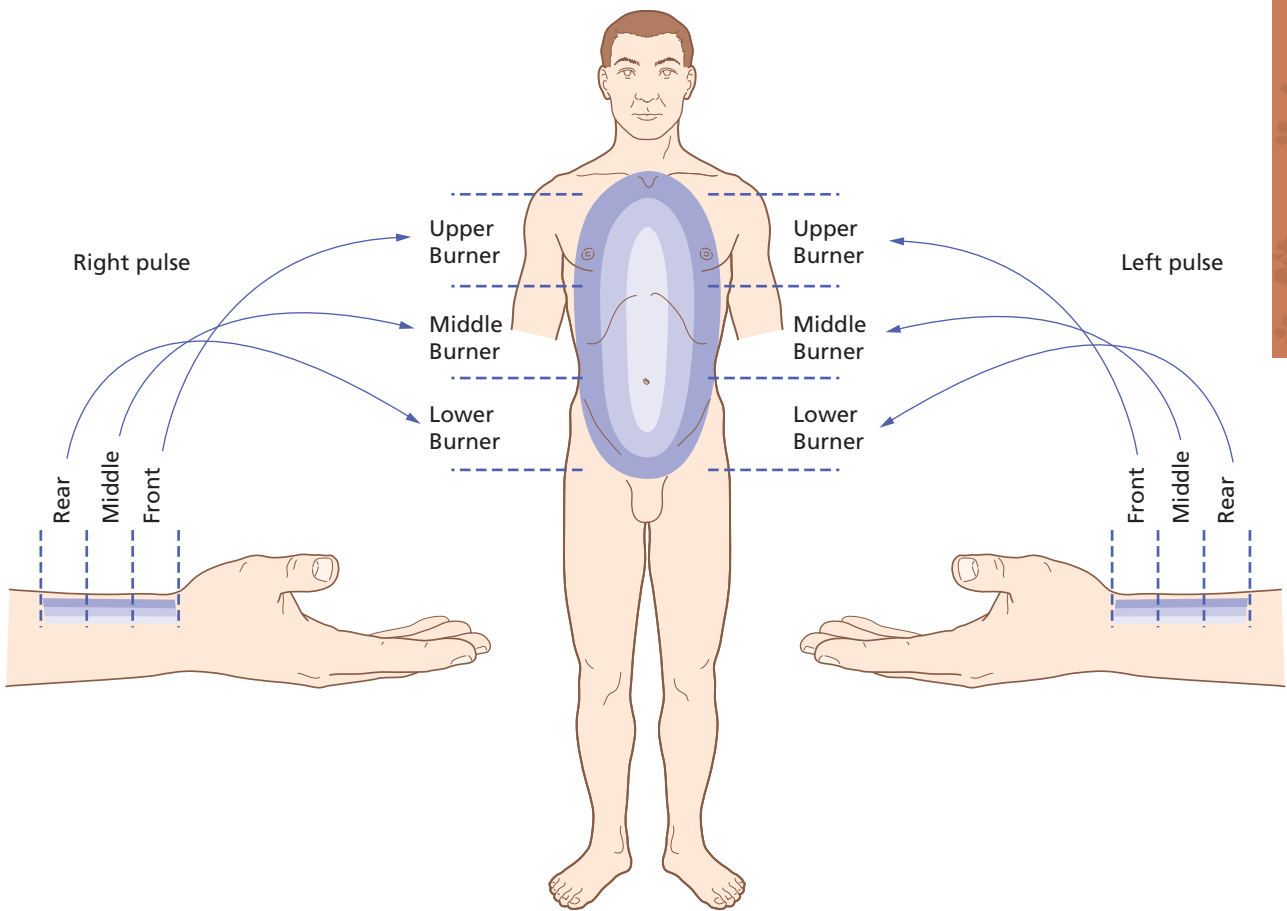


Figure 49.17. Relationship between three positions and Three Burners, between three levels and the three energetic layers and between left and right pulse to left and right side.

Scattered, Big, Overflowing, Fine, Minute, etc. Lifting and pressing tells us whether the pulse in that position is Floating, Deep, Weak, Soggy, Floating-Empty, Hidden, Leather or Firm.

g) Counting the pulse rate

Finally, counting the pulse rate is carried out. As mentioned above, in the old times this was done by referring the pulse rate to the breathing rate of the practitioners. Nowadays, we simply count the pulse rate with a watch. This is of course crucial to diagnose pulse qualities that reflect irregularities of the pulse speed and rate, for example Slow, Rapid, Slowed-Down, Hurried, Moving, Knotted, Hasty or Intermittent.

11. CLINICAL APPLICATION OF PULSE DIAGNOSIS

Pulse diagnosis is an essential part of Chinese diagnosis for many reasons. Two aspects could be singled out as being the most important features of pulse diagnosis: first, apart from giving us indications about prevailing disharmonies, it also reflects the constitution of a person, and second, when expertly applied, pulse diagnosis can give us a very detailed and accurate picture of the state of Qi in all organs and all parts of the body.

The following are some examples of the clinical application of pulse diagnosis.

a) The pulse is often crucial in clinching a diagnosis

The pulse is often crucial in clinching a diagnosis. A common example of the value of the pulse in clinching the diagnosis is when a person (usually a man) presents complaining of tiredness, sluggishness and general listlessness; he may speak with a low voice, and the general first impression would be that of a Deficiency as the cause of the problem. However, if the pulse is Wiry on both sides (as often happens in such patients), it clearly points to Liver-Qi stagnation as the cause of the problem. In such a case, the pulse is often the only symptom pointing to a Full condition, and specifically Liver-Qi stagnation, as the cause of the problem.

The following case history is another illustration of the value of the pulse in clinching a diagnosis.

Case History

A 65-year-old woman complained of an acute pain in the ribs on the left side. She had seen her doctor and an orthopaedic surgeon, who had ordered X-rays, which showed no abnormality. Both the doctor and the surgeon treated this as a musculoskeletal problem.

When asking about her symptom, I was also somewhat puzzled, as she had no symptoms of a Liver or Gall-Bladder pattern that might explain the rib pain. I was also puzzled as to why, if this was indeed a musculoskeletal problem, it should start suddenly without a fall or any other apparent cause. However, her pulse told a completely different story: it was very Rapid (over 100 beats/min), Overflowing and Slippery. In particular, the right-Front position (Lung position) was very Overflowing. This pulse clearly indicated that, far from being a simple musculoskeletal problem, she had a serious internal organ problem and, although one cannot conclusively diagnose cancer, I suspected there was a serious disease in the left lung causing the rib pain. I thought this would be either pleurisy or a carcinoma.

I insisted that she go back to the doctor for further tests. An MRI scan and blood tests showed that she had carcinoma of the left lung and spine.

b) The pulse is essential to distinguish deficiency from excess

Distinguishing Deficiency from Excess is one of the most useful aspects of pulse diagnosis. In many cases, the

patient presents with a mixture of Deficiency and Excess; indeed, this, rather than a pure Deficiency or pure Excess condition, is probably the most common situation in practice.

Post-viral fatigue syndrome is a good example of this situation; practically all patients suffering from this condition suffer from retention of Dampness together with a deficiency of the Spleen, Stomach, Lungs or Kidneys or a mixture of these. However, the combination of a Deficient and an Excess condition is never 50–50; one aspect is always predominant, and it often is not easy to determine this from the symptoms and signs. For example, a patient suffering from post-viral fatigue syndrome will experience extreme fatigue and poor appetite (symptoms of Deficiency) but also muscle aches and a feeling of heaviness (symptoms of Fullness, in this case Dampness). In such a situation, the pulse is absolutely crucial in clinching to determine whether the Deficiency or the Excess predominates. If the pulse is on the whole weak, it means the Deficiency predominates; if the pulse is on the whole of the full type, it means the Excess predominates. Thus, in this case, the pulse is the single most important aspect of diagnosis to make this differentiation.

The important implication of this is that the pulse therefore determines the choice of treatment principle: if it is weak on the whole, we should concentrate on tonifying the Upright Qi, and if it is of the full type on the whole, we should concentrate on expelling pathogenic factors (in this case, resolve Dampness).

c) The pulse is essential to determine the treatment principle

The pulse is essential to determine the treatment principle in complex conditions of mixed Deficiency and Excess. The example of post-viral fatigue syndrome was given above.

Another example could be a situation of Liver-Blood deficiency leading to Liver-Yang rising; this situation is very common in women and is often the cause of menstrual problems such as premenstrual tension or menstrual headaches. The symptoms themselves may not help us determine whether the deficiency of Liver-Blood or the rising of Liver-Yang predominates. The pulse can help us differentiate this very clearly: if it is Choppy or Fine, the deficiency of Liver-Blood predominates and we should therefore nourish Blood; if it is Wiry, the rising of Liver-Yang

predominates and we should therefore subdue Liver-Yang.

d) The pulse in emotional problems

In many situations, the pulse reflects emotional problems clearly. A few examples will be given here.

When a person is affected by sadness, grief or worry, the Heart pulse may become slightly and relatively Overflowing; it is important to note that this is not the true Overflowing pulse, but is nevertheless slightly Overflowing *in relation* to the other positions. Often the pulse may be quite Weak or Choppy on the whole, but a careful feeling of the Heart position reveals that it is very slightly Overflowing compared with the rest of the pulse.

This Heart-pulse quality is quite subtle and may be easily missed; besides being more superficial compared with the other pulse positions, the Heart pulse also feels somewhat 'round' and very slightly Slippery. This is a sure sign that the patient is deeply affected by emotional problems such as sorrow, sadness or grief affecting the Heart. When all the other pulses are weak but the Heart pulse is relatively Overflowing as described, it usually indicates that the person is suffering from sadness and bearing his or her emotional strain in silence.

Another good example of a clear reflection of emotional stress by the pulse is the situation in which a patient may appear very depressed, walk slowly and talk with a low voice, all of which lead us to assume that he or she suffers from a Deficiency; however, very often (and more commonly in men), the pulse of these people is extremely Wiry and Full in all positions. This is an absolutely reliable indication that the person is not really depressed but angry, or, to put it differently, he or she may be depressed because of repressed anger.

A Rapid pulse is another indication of emotional stress. Usually the person is under great stress and suffers from fears, anxiety, guilt or the consequence of shock. The following case history is an illustration of this point.

Case History

A 28-year-old woman complained of tiredness, nausea and dizziness. She had no other symptoms and seemed quite healthy. Emotionally she appeared to be quite happy and she spoke with a cheerful, ringing voice, smiling frequently. All the indications were, therefore, that she suffered from a simple deficiency of the Spleen

and possibly Blood, as many women do. However, the pulse showed a completely different picture: it was Fine and very Rapid (over 100). Her tongue had a red tip. I had the feeling that she had long-standing, repressed emotional problems, and I suspected shock was the main cause of them. When I asked whether she had suffered a shock some years before, she burst into tears and said that she had been sexually abused from the age of 6 to 9.

Of course, we should exclude other causes of a Rapid pulse such as an infection, a true Heat pattern or Blood Heat. In the absence of clear Heat symptoms and signs, a Rapid pulse usually indicates the above-mentioned emotional problems.

A pulse without wave indicates that the person suffers from sadness or grief, which also may be indicated by a very Weak Lung pulse. A Full Lung pulse may indicate that the person suffers from either worry or unexpressed grief. If both Front positions (Lungs and Heart) are Weak and Short, they indicate long-standing emotional problems deriving from sadness or grief. A Moving pulse often indicates shock; it should be noted that the pulse may retain this quality many years after the original shock.

THE PULSE IN EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

- Heart pulse slightly Overflowing: sadness, grief or worry
- All pulses Wiry and Full: repressed anger or frustration
- Rapid pulse: fear, guilt or shock
- Pulse without a wave: sadness or grief
- Weak Lung pulse: sadness or grief
- Full Lung pulse: worry or unexpressed grief
- Both Front positions Weak and Short: long-standing sadness or grief
- Moving pulse: shock

e) The pulse as an indicator of an organ problem

When all the pulse positions are very weak and deep except for one, this usually indicates that the organ corresponding to that position is 'diseased'. This often points to an actual organic disease in a Western medical sense (rather than a Chinese pattern of disharmony), but it is by no means an absolute rule. For example, if the pulse is Weak, Choppy and Deep in all positions except in the Heart position, this may simply indicate deep emotional problems as described above, but it also may indicate an actual heart problem; the latter is all

the more likely if the Heart pulse feels Slippery and Fine and particularly Slippery in its medial and lateral sides.

A Floating quality on the Heart pulse also often indicates a problem with the heart itself, especially if it is Floating-Hollow on the lateral and medial sides of the pulse position (which may indicate high blood pressure). A Floating-Weak-Hollow quality indicates that the heart is dilated; this often occurs in people who jog for long distances every day. A Floating-Tight-Hollow quality may indicate hardening of the arteries.

f) The pulse as an indicator of a heart problem

Just as Heart-Qi is reflected on the pulse as a whole, irrespective of positions, the condition of the heart (in the Western sense) is also reflected on the whole pulse, not only at the left-Front position. We should always remember that when we feel the pulse we feel the radial artery, which is a blood vessel, and that the Heart governs all blood vessels; thus, by definition, the general feeling of the radial artery reflects the condition of the Heart in a Chinese sense and also of the heart in a Western medical sense.

For example, when the whole pulse is Wiry, Slippery, Overflowing and Hurried and feels very hard, aortic aneurysm may be suspected.

If the pulse is Hurried (i.e., very rapid and agitated) and generally Full, it often indicates a heart problem such as tachycardia (in all its various types, e.g., supraventricular tachycardia, junctional tachycardia or broad-complex tachycardia). Similarly, any irregularity of the pulse (Knotted, Hasty, Intermittent) may indicate a heart conduction problem such as atrial fibrillation (when it is rapid and irregular, i.e., Hasty), sick sinus syndrome, Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome or Lown-Ganong-Levine syndrome.

If the pulse is extremely Slow, it may also indicate a heart problem such as sick sinus syndrome or atrioventricular block (unless, of course it is due to intense, regular exercise such as in athletes).

If the pulse is Minute or Scattered, it may indicate the possibility of heart failure. The medial and lateral aspects of the Heart pulse may reflect problems of the valves such as mitral stenosis, mitral regurgitation or mitral prolapse; in such cases, these aspects of the Heart pulse (felt by rolling the finger medially and laterally very slightly) feel Slippery or Tight. See [Figure 50.2](#) in [Chapter 50](#).

The following three case histories illustrate the use of the pulse in diagnosing heart conditions.



The pulse as a whole may reflect a heart pathology.

Case History

A 45-year-old woman complained of extreme tiredness, something she had been suffering from for over 20 years. She complained of poor memory, floaters, tinnitus, frequent urination and occasional dribbling of urine. She also suffered from constipation, and her periods had stopped 6 months previously.

As a child, she had suffered from frequent bouts of bronchitis and pneumonia. She had received acupuncture treatment for 5 years and Chinese herbs for about 2; these treatments did produce some improvement, but it never lasted.

Her tongue was slightly Red on the sides and Swollen, and her pulse was Deep, very Weak, Choppy, Fine and Slow (52 beats/min).

Three main patterns emerge from an analysis of the clinical manifestations: Liver-Blood deficiency (stoppage of the periods, floaters, tiredness, Choppy pulse); Kidney-Yang deficiency (tinnitus, frequent urination, dribbling of urine, tiredness, constipation, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse); and Heart-Blood deficiency (poor memory, Choppy pulse). However, the fact that the pulse is very Weak, Choppy and Fine in *all* positions and also that it is very Slow clearly indicates that the main problem probably lies in the Heart, and specifically a severe deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Heart. This deficiency may be congenital or may have been induced by the frequent bouts of bronchitis and pneumonia during her childhood. I advised this patient to have her heart examined by a cardiologist; she did, and the cardiologist said the pericardium membrane was enlarged and showed signs of inflammation. The principle of treatment in this case, therefore, should be not only to nourish Liver-Blood and tonify Kidney-Yang but also to tonify the Qi and Blood of the Heart.

Case History

A 60-year-old man sought treatment for a frozen shoulder. On taking his pulse, I noticed that it was very Full, Slippery, Wiry, very Overflowing and Rapid. The combination of these qualities to such a degree clearly

indicated not only a Heart disharmony but also the possibility of a problem in the heart or blood vessels; however, he had no symptoms of heart problems (no hypertension, no chest pain, no arrhythmia). Although he came to me for treatment of his shoulder problem, I tried to encourage him to see a cardiologist, which he did and was found to have an aneurysm of the aorta for which he needed an operation.

Case History

A 25-year-old woman complained of painful periods with clear symptoms of Cold in the Uterus (spastic pain, feeling cold during the period, menstrual blood with small dark clots, Pale tongue, Slow pulse). However, a striking feature of her pulse (for her age) was its slowness (48 beats/min) and its stopping at irregular intervals; this pulse quality (slow and stopping at irregular intervals) is called Knotted. This indicated the possibility not only of a Heart disharmony but also of an actual heart problem, and she was advised to see a cardiologist, who indeed diagnosed a conduction problem in the heart.

g) The pulse does not necessarily reflect all the aspects of a disharmony

As for the tongue, we should not expect the pulse to reflect *all* the aspects of a disharmony. For example, if a woman suffers from Liver-Qi stagnation causing very clear symptoms of premenstrual tension with distension of the breasts and abdomen and irritability, the pulse may not be Wiry if the Liver-Qi stagnation occurs against a background of Liver-Blood deficiency. In such a case, the pulse may be Weak and Choppy, reflecting only the Liver-Blood deficiency but not the Liver-Qi stagnation. The opposite also may occur: in the above example, the pulse may be Wiry if the Liver-Qi stagnation is intense, in which case the pulse quality reflects only this pattern and not the Liver-Blood deficiency.

In the elderly, the pulse is frequently of the Full type, often being Wiry and/or Slippery; this happens because old people suffer frequently from chronic Phlegm, Blood stasis or internal Wind, all of which may make the pulse Wiry and hard. However, very many old people suffering from such patterns also frequently suffer from Yin deficiency (which may be apparent from the tongue being without coating): the Wiry and Full quality of the pulse masks the Yin deficiency, which does not show on the pulse.

h) The pulse indicates disharmonies beyond the presenting patterns

When the pulse indicates disharmonies beyond the presenting patterns, it raises the important issue of integration of pulse diagnosis with symptom diagnosis. In the majority of cases, the pulse and clinical manifestations accord with each other; for example, if a patient displays all the symptoms of Phlegm, the pulse is most likely Slippery. In other cases, as mentioned above, the pulse reflects only one aspect of a disharmony. There are cases, however, when the pulse seems to be at variance with the clinical manifestations or at least unrelated to them. The tendency in modern China (according to my experience) is to give more importance to the clinical manifestations, and if the pulse does not accord with them, it is simply ignored. I personally disagree with this approach, as I think that the pulse is always clinically significant and should never be discarded as a diagnostic sign.

Many examples could be given of situations in which the pulse seems to be unrelated to the clinical manifestations (not necessarily contradicting them). For example, the patient has symptoms of Phlegm but the pulse is not Slippery; the patient has *no* symptoms of Phlegm but the pulse is Slippery; the patient appears to be an exuberant, Yang-type of person, but the pulse is very Weak and Deep; the patient has no symptoms of any Liver disharmony, but the pulse is Wiry (or vice versa), etc.

In such cases, apart from the above-mentioned situation, when the pulse reflects one aspect of a disharmony and the clinical manifestations reflect another, a pulse that is seemingly unrelated to the presenting clinical manifestations simply reflects the existence of a disharmony that has not caused symptoms *yet*.

A common example relates to the Lung pulse: a woman may present with clinical manifestations of Liver-Qi stagnation causing premenstrual tension or other menstrual irregularities, and the pulse is slightly Wiry, but the position that most stands out is that of the Lung being extremely Weak and Deep. What are we to make of this? Because all the clinical manifestations and the Wiry pulse point to a Liver disharmony, shall we ignore the Lung position? In my opinion, this should never be done. In this example, the weakness of the Lung position simply indicates that this patient suffers from Lung-Qi deficiency without symptoms of it *yet*; the weakness of the Lung position should never be ignored, because, after all, a Weak Lung pulse is reflective of Lung-Qi deficiency as much as a weak voice and

chronic cough. In such a case, I would definitely pay attention to the weakness of the Lung pulse and tonify the Lungs (in addition to treating the Liver disharmony).

To give another example relating to a Full- rather than Empty-type of pulse, it happens frequently that a person has no symptoms of Phlegm but the pulse is clearly Slippery. Barring the cases when a Slippery pulse may indicate health (or, of course, pregnancy), this definitely indicates that the patient is suffering from Phlegm even though there are no manifestations of it.

Incidentally, this characteristic applies to tongue diagnosis too: the tongue also can show disharmonies beyond the presenting manifestations. A good example is a central Stomach crack on the tongue indicating a tendency to Stomach-Yin deficiency even in the absence of any digestive symptoms.

i) The pulse can indicate an underlying deficiency in the absence of symptoms

When the pulse is Weak in a certain position, it definitely indicates a deficiency of that particular organ whether there are symptoms of this deficiency or not. It is precisely for this reason that pulse diagnosis allows us to give preventive treatment before the onset of clinical manifestations.

A weakness of the Kidney pulse (often on both sides) is the most common example of this situation. There are very many patients (especially women) who have a very Weak pulse on both Rear positions without any symptoms of Kidney deficiency. However, as mentioned above, a Weak and Deep pulse on both Rear positions reflects a Kidney deficiency as much as tiredness, backache, dizziness and tinnitus do. Indeed, this is precisely one reason why pulse diagnosis is so important: it points to a certain disharmony unequivocally, which is more than isolated symptoms do. In the example just mentioned, if the patient suffered only from dizziness, we could not diagnose a Kidney deficiency because this symptom may be due to many other disharmonies (Blood deficiency, Phlegm, Liver-Yang rising, etc.), but the weakness of the pulse on both Rear positions points to a Kidney deficiency unequivocally.

j) The pulse in cancer

There is no specific pulse quality or pulse picture that allows us to diagnose cancer unequivocally. Generally

speaking, in advanced cancer two opposite pulse pictures may emerge: either the pulse becomes extremely Weak, Choppy, Fine and Deep, or it becomes Full, Slippery, Overflowing and Rapid.

Although the pulse cannot be used to diagnose cancer, it is very important to determine the prognosis and the treatment principle.

As for *prognosis*, if a patient has cancer, the prognosis is poor if the pulse has either of the pictures described above; that is, it is either very Deep, Weak, Choppy and Fine or very Full, Slippery, Overflowing and Rapid. If the pulse in addition is particularly Rapid and Overflowing, it may indicate the presence of Toxic Heat, which is never a good sign in cancer or in patients with cancer who have undergone Western treatment.

As for the *treatment principle*, the pulse is very important indeed. Generally speaking, cancer patients will undergo some treatment in the form of surgery, radiotherapy or chemotherapy or a combination of these. At the end of these treatments, our role is to stimulate the immune system to prevent a recurrence. From the point of view of Chinese medicine, we have to assess the condition of the patient as if he or she still had cancer. In fact, Western treatments may remove the cancer surgically, by radiotherapy or chemotherapy, but they do not remove the patterns that were at the root of the cancer; the most common patterns are Phlegm, Blood stasis, Toxic Heat and Dampness.

We should therefore assess the patient's condition very carefully to determine whether Deficiency or Excess predominates – that is, whether the above pathogenic factors are relatively weak and the main problem is a deficiency of the Upright Qi or whether the above pathogenic factors are still quite strong. In the former case, the aim is to tonify the Upright Qi primarily and expel pathogenic factors secondarily; in the latter case the aim is to expel pathogenic factors primarily and tonify the Upright Qi secondarily. The pulse is crucial in making this distinction and choosing the appropriate treatment principle; if the pulse is primarily Weak, Fine, Choppy or Empty, we need to concentrate our attention on tonifying the Upright Qi; if the pulse is of the Full type, Slippery, Wiry, Tight or Firm, we need to concentrate on expelling pathogenic factors (which may be to resolve Phlegm, invigorate Blood, resolve Dampness or clear Toxic Heat).



After surgery in patients with cancer, the pulse is crucial in determining whether there is still an active pathogenic factor and therefore in determining the treatment principle.

For example, let us assume that a woman suffering from a malignant breast tumour comes to us after undergoing a lumpectomy and ensuing radiotherapy. We should assess her condition carefully, as if she still had the tumour, because the surgery and radiotherapy have removed the tumour but not the pattern at the root of its formation. The patterns appearing in breast cancer are usually Phlegm and/or Blood stasis in differing combinations; of course, there is often also Qi stagnation, but this cannot cause a tumour by itself, whereas Phlegm and Blood stasis can.

When presented with such patients, we should therefore not assume in all cases that we must tonify the Upright Qi to prevent a recurrence: we must choose the treatment principle according to the clinical manifestations, bearing in mind that we cannot rely on an examination of the tumour, as this has been removed.

In the presence of a tumour we would palpate it to decide whether it is caused by Phlegm (in which case it is relatively soft and painless) or by Blood stasis (in which case it is hard and probably painful). A decision on the choice of treatment principles relies a lot on the pulse: if this of the Empty type, we should concentrate our attention on tonifying the Upright Qi; if it is of the Full type (Slippery, Wiry, Tight), we should concentrate on expelling pathogenic factors (resolve Phlegm and/or invigorate Blood).

If the pulse is also Rapid and Overflowing, it may indicate the presence of Toxic Heat, and we need to clear Heat and resolve Toxin (in herbal medicine this is done by using herbs from the category that clears Toxic Heat, many of which also have an anti-cancer effect).

12. INTEGRATION OF PULSE AND TONGUE DIAGNOSIS

There are many ways in which the integration of pulse and tongue diagnosis is crucial in clinical practice.

a) Qi and Blood

The pulse and tongue are quite complementary insofar as the pulse reflects more the state of Qi and the tongue that of Blood; of course this is a generalization (because the pulse can reflect the state of Blood, e.g., when it is Choppy), but it is a useful one nevertheless.

This distinction can be useful in patients suffering from emotional problems. For example, a Wiry and Full

pulse often indicates a Liver pattern deriving from emotional stress. If the tongue-body colour is normal, this tells us the emotional problem is not long-standing; if the tongue is Red, it indicates the emotional problem is more long-standing and more severe.

b) Time factor

The pulse is more influenced by short-term factors than is the tongue. For example, a period of overwork, an emotional upset and physical exercise can all change the pulse in the short term but not the tongue.

For this reason, the tongue is a good indicator of the length of a problem; for example, an Overflowing Heart pulse indicates that the person is under emotional stress, and a tongue that is Red with a redder tip indicates that this problem is long-standing.

Another example is that of Blood stasis. A Choppy or Firm pulse may point to Blood stasis, and if the tongue is Purple, it indicates the long duration of the problem. Another good example is that of Yin deficiency. A Floating-Empty pulse indicates Yin deficiency, and the tongue tells us the exact stage of Yin deficiency by observing the degree of absence of coating.

c) When the pulse is rapid and the tongue is not red

A Rapid pulse indicates Heat, and this should be mirrored by a Red tongue. In practice, quite often the pulse is Rapid but the tongue is not Red.

Shock may be an explanation of this discrepancy because it often makes the pulse Rapid but does not cause a redness of the tongue.

Another explanation of this discrepancy is in cases in which a person constantly pushes himself or herself into working too much and for too many hours; this causes the heart to become dilated, and the Heart pulse is often Overflowing but Empty and the pulse Rapid.

d) When the pulse is slow and the tongue is red

The most common explanation of this discrepancy is the practice of intense exercise, especially jogging or running; this makes the pulse Slow. Because the Slowness is due to the exercise and not to a true Cold pattern, the tongue is not Pale and may be Red from other reasons.

Another possible explanation of a contradiction between a Slow pulse and a Red tongue (and one that should always be kept in mind) is heart disease. A very Slow pulse may often indicate some irregularities in heart conduction, especially if the pulse is also irregular.

e) Pulse diagnosis adds detail to tongue diagnosis

The pulse often adds detail to the findings from tongue diagnosis. For example, a sticky-yellow coating with red points on the root of the tongue indicates Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner, but it does not tell us whether this is in the Bladder, Intestines or Uterus. The pulse would add detail to the information gleaned from the tongue because Damp-Heat in the Bladder would manifest with a Slippery-Wiry quality on the left-Rear position, Damp-Heat in the Intestines with the same quality on both Rear positions, and Damp-Heat in the Uterus with the same quality on the Uterus position just proximal to the left-Rear position.

Another field in which the pulse adds detail to the tongue is that of Heart patterns. When the tongue has a deep central crack, this indicates the tendency to Heart patterns from emotional problems. However, it also may indicate the hereditary tendency to actual heart problems. If the Heart pulse is Full and hard on the lateral and medial positions of the Heart position (rolling the finger laterally and medially very slightly), this indicates the possibility of an actual heart disease.

Another situation in which the pulse adds detail to the findings from the tongue is when the tongue is Purple, indicating Blood stasis. If the whole tongue is Purple, this does not help us pinpoint the organ affected; the Wiry quality of the pulse in one or other organ position helps us pinpoint which organ is particularly affected by Blood stasis.

13. LIMITATIONS OF PULSE DIAGNOSIS

The main drawbacks of pulse diagnosis are its subjectivity and its being readily affected by short-term changes.

a) It is subjective

More than any other element of Chinese diagnosis, pulse diagnosis is rather subjective, at least compared with other elements of diagnosis, such as looking and

palpating. For example, there can be little disagreement over whether a face is red or a tongue very red; such signs also can be seen objectively by different observers. If, however, a pulse is described as being Wiry, this is a purely subjective interpretation on the part of the practitioner; it is impossible to 'show' other observers how the pulse is Wiry, and, moreover, another practitioner might describe the same pulse as Slippery.

b) It is subject to short-term influences

The pulse is easily and quickly influenced by short-term factors, at least when compared with the tongue. For example, if a person has a sudden emotional upset, this may make the pulse rapid but it will not change the tongue in the short term. Likewise, the pulse is obviously affected by exercise, becoming rapid, while the tongue is not affected by it. If a person works very hard for a week with little sleep, the pulse will reflect this, immediately becoming quite weak and deep, but a single week would not bring about a change in the tongue-body colour (though there are situations, such as in acute febrile diseases, when the tongue-body colour does change rapidly).

For these reasons, the integration of tongue and pulse diagnosis, as discussed above, is absolutely crucial.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- Pulse diagnosis, which is a never-ending skill to master, being vital as it aids identification of the internal organs affected and the prevailing pattern, and it reflects the overall health of Qi and Blood.
- Why the pulse is felt on the radial artery.
- The three sections of the pulse: Front – Inch (*Cun*), Middle – Gate (*Guan*), and Rear – Foot (*Chi*), according to the Classics.
- Assignment of pulse positions to the organs according to the Classics, and reconciling the disparities.
- The three levels of the pulse according to Li Shi Zhen.
- The importance of the method of pulse taking based on time, levelling the arm, equalizing the breathing and finger placement.
- The following factors affecting the pulse: season, gender, age, body build, menstruation, pregnancy and radial artery displacement (*Fan Guan Mai* and *Xie Fei Mai*).
- The three attributes of the normal pulse: spirit, Stomach-Qi and root.
- Systematic guidelines for interpreting the pulse.
- That the pulse is crucial for clarifying diagnosis, especially when other signs and symptoms are contradictory or confusing.

- That the pulse does not always reflect all aspects of disharmony, indicating harmonies beyond presenting patterns and underlying deficiencies that have not yet manifested in symptoms.
- The role of the pulse in cancer for determining the prognosis and treatment principle based on its development into a Weak, Choppy, Fine or Deep pulse or a Full, Slippery, Overflowing and Rapid pulse.
- The integration of pulse diagnosis and tongue diagnosis.
- Pulse diagnosis has limitations, as it is subjective and subject to short-term influences.

END NOTES

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*Combinations**Differentiation of similar pulses**Clinical significance in each position***Classification of pulse qualities****The eight basic groups of pulse qualities***Floating pulses**Deep pulses**Slow pulses**Rapid pulses**Slippery pulses**Choppy pulses**Empty pulses**Full pulses***The different aspects for the classification of pulse qualities***According to depth**According to rate**According to strength**According to size**According to length**According to shape**According to rhythm***Classification of pulse qualities according to Qi, Blood and Body Fluids patterns***Qi deficiency**Yang deficiency**Blood deficiency**Yin deficiency**Qi stagnation**Blood stasis**Phlegm**Dampness***Classification of pulse qualities according to the eight principles***Yin-Yang**Exterior-interior**Heat-cold**Deficiency-excess***Classification of pulse qualities according to the six Stages patterns****Classification of pulse qualities according to the four Levels patterns****Classification of pulse qualities according to the Triple Burner patterns****Terminology***The pulse positions in detail***Left-Front position (heart)***Overflowing**Short**Weak**Floating**Slippery**Hollow**Choppy**Wiry***Left-Middle position (Liver)***Floating**Deep**Slippery**Overflowing**Wiry***Left-Rear position (Kidney)***Floating**Deep**Slippery**Weak**Fine**Overflowing**Hollow***Right-Front position (Lung)***Floating**Slippery**Overflowing**Hollow***Right-Middle position (Stomach and Spleen)***Floating**Wiry**Weak**Fine**Slippery**Soggy**Hollow***Right-Rear position (Small Intestine and Kidneys)***Floating**Weak**Slippery**Wiry***Pulse qualities indicating dangerous conditions***Boiling cauldron pulse**Circling fish pulse**Swimming shrimp pulse**Leaking roof pulse**Pecking bird pulse**Untying rope pulse**Bouncing stone pulse**Upturned knife pulse**Spinning bean pulse**Sesame seed hasty pulse***The influence of drugs on the pulse****Tranquilizers and hypnotics****Antidepressants***Tricyclic antidepressants**Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)**Monoamine oxydase inhibitors (MAOIs)***Beta-blockers****ACE-inhibitors****Warfarin****Diuretics****H₂-receptor antagonists****Insulin**

The pulse qualities will be discussed under the following headings:

- The 29 pulse qualities (Floating, Deep, Slow, Rapid, Empty, Full, Slippery, Choppy, Weak, Fine, Minute, Soggy, Short, Hollow, Leather, Hidden, Scattered, Wiry, Tight, Overflowing, Big, Firm, Long, Moving, Knotted, Hasty, Hurried, Intermittent, Slowed-down)
- Three nontraditional pulse qualities (Irregular, Stagnant and Sad)
- Classification of pulse qualities
 - The eight basic groups of pulse qualities
 - The different aspects of the classification of pulse qualities
 - Classification of pulse qualities according to Qi, Blood and Body Fluid patterns
 - Classification of pulse qualities according to the Eight Principles
 - Classification of pulse qualities according to the Six Stages patterns
 - Classification of pulse qualities according to the four Levels patterns
 - Classification of pulse qualities according to the Triple Burner patterns
- Terminology
- The pulse positions in detail
- Pulse qualities indicating dangerous conditions
- The influence of drugs on the pulse

The pulse 'qualities' described in Chinese books over the centuries have varied, but they have been standardized today into 28 or 29 qualities. In theory, there is no special reason we should be restricted to using only those terms. For example, there is no 'Hard' pulse quality, but this is a term that often comes to mind when one is feeling a particular pulse. However, it is important to train oneself to use the set terminology of pulse qualities in order to establish a common ground of communication among practitioners and between teachers and students. For instance, a practitioner or student might describe a pulse as 'squidgy' in his or her own terminology (in fact, the term 'squidgy' describes the Soggy pulse quite well), but this would not be much use to other practitioners or students.

It cannot be stressed strongly enough that the pulse qualities, with their descriptions and clinical significance, should be memorized. Only by memorizing the pulse qualities can the student then communicate with the clinical teacher; only when both the student and the clinical teacher are clear as to what a Wiry pulse feels like and means can they communicate with each other

and the student correlate the theoretical description of a Wiry pulse with his or her own feeling of the pulse.

It should be stressed that the pulse 'quality' can be felt and identified only if we move the fingers constantly by 'rolling' them distally and proximally, 'pushing' them medially and laterally, and 'pressing' down and releasing upwards as described in the previous chapter. We cannot feel and identify the pulse quality if we keep the fingers absolutely still because the fingers need to feel, probe and explore the shape and size of the pulse, and this can be done only by moving the fingers in all four directions around a given pulse position (i.e., distally, proximally, medially and laterally).

For example, we can deduce that a pulse is Long or Short only if we gently roll the finger distally; we can deduce that a pulse is Slippery only if we feel 'around' it by moving the fingers medially and laterally; we can deduce that a pulse is Floating-Empty only if we press the fingers down and then release them to explore its depth.



The pulse qualities cannot be felt by keeping the fingers absolutely still. The fingers must feel all around the pulse position: distally, proximally, medially, laterally, and at different levels.

The pulse qualities discussed are as illustrated in [Table 50.1](#).

The order in which I have arranged these 29 pulse qualities is different from that traditionally used in Chinese books. The first eight qualities are the traditional, basic ones: Floating, Deep, Slow, Rapid, Empty, Full, Slippery and Choppy. The other 21 qualities are arranged in three groups:

- 9 to 17: Empty-type qualities
- 18 to 24: Full-type qualities
- 25 to 29: qualities denoting the rate or rhythm of the pulse

In addition to the above 29 traditional qualities, I shall also discuss three new qualities, mostly owed to Dr Li Shi Shen's experience: Irregular, Stagnant, and Sad.

For each pulse quality, I shall discuss the following:

- Pulse description
- Clinical significance
- Combinations
- Differentiation from similar pulses
- Clinical significance in each position, according to Li Shi Zhen.

Table 50.1 The 29 pulse qualities

Number	English	Pinyin	Literal translation	Chinese	Number	English	Pinyin	Literal translation	Chinese
1	Floating	<i>Fu</i>	Floating	浮	17	Scattered	<i>San</i>	Break-up, disperse, dispel	散
2	Deep	<i>Chen</i>	Deep (sinking)	沉	18	Wiry	<i>Xian</i>	Bowstring	纤
3	Slow	<i>Chi</i>	Slow, tardy	迟	19	Tight	<i>Jin</i>	Tight, taut	紧
4	Rapid	<i>Shu</i>	Several (in succession)	速	20	Overflowing	<i>Hong</i>	Big, vast, flood	宏
5	Empty	<i>Xu</i>	Empty	虚	21	Big	<i>Da</i>	Big	大
6	Full	<i>Shi</i>	Solid	实	22	Firm	<i>Lao</i>	Firm, fastened, prison	牢
7	Slippery	<i>Hua</i>	Slippery	滑	23	Long	<i>Chang</i>	Long	长
8	Choppy	<i>Se</i>	Rough	涩	24	Moving	<i>Dong</i>	To move	动
9	Weak	<i>Ruo</i>	Weak, feeble	弱	25	Knotted	<i>Jie</i>	Tie, knot, knit	节
10	Fine	<i>Xi</i>	Thin, slender	细	26	Hasty	<i>Cu</i>	Hurried, urgent, short of time	促
11	Minute	<i>Wei</i>	Minute, tiny	微	27	Hurried	<i>Ji</i>	fast, rapid, urgent	急
12	Soggy	<i>Ru (Ruan)</i>	Immerse, moist, (soft)	润	28	Intermittent	<i>Dai</i>	Take the place of	待
13	Short	<i>Duan</i>	Short	短	29	Slowed-down	<i>Huan</i>	Slow, delay, postpone	缓
14	Hollow	<i>Kou</i>	Hollow	窟					
15	Leather	<i>Ge</i>	Leather	革					
16	Hidden	<i>Fu</i>	Hide, lie prostrate	伏					

I have paired each of the eight basic qualities with its opposite (i.e., Floating/Deep, Slow/Rapid, Full/Empty, and Slippery/Choppy). These pulse qualities are considered to be the eight basic ones because they correspond closely to the Eight Principles: Floating and Deep correspond to Exterior and Interior; Slow and Rapid to Cold and Heat; Full and Empty to Excess and Deficiency; and Slippery and Choppy to Phlegm (or Dampness) and Blood deficiency. The Slippery/Choppy qualities are part of this group because they are very common. Another reason the latter two pulse qualities are paired is that, to a certain extent, they are at different ends of a scale in terms of how they feel under the finger.

THE EIGHT BASIC PULSE QUALITIES

- Floating – Exterior
- Deep – Interior
- Rapid – Heat
- Slow – Cold
- Full – Excess
- Empty – Deficiency
- Slippery – Phlegm or Dampness
- Choppy – Blood deficiency

THE EIGHT BASIC PULSE QUALITIES

1. FLOATING

a) Pulse description

This pulse is felt on very light pressure; in extreme cases, it is felt with no pressure at all. As its name implies, it has a 'floating' quality, and it is relatively resistant to pressure. We can think of a large plank of wood in water; we can push it down with some resistance, but it comes back up. In other words, there is a difference between a pulse that is felt clearly on the surface (as it should be if Yang-Qi is normal) and a pulse that is Floating – the Floating pulse is more resistant to finger pressure than a pulse that is normal at the superficial level.

Especially in summertime, it is normal for the pulse to be relatively more superficial, but that does not make it a Floating pulse. Bearing in mind the three levels of the pulse discussed in the previous chapter, the Floating pulse is felt very clearly (and somewhat excessively) on the superficial level, which corresponds to the Qi and Yang energies.

The traditional description of a Floating pulse states that it feels like 'feathers being ruffled by the wind'. The 'Classic of Difficulties' in [Chapter 18](#) says: '*When the pulse is Floating, it is felt moving above the muscle.*'¹

b) Clinical significance

Generally speaking, the Floating pulse indicates the presence of a pathogenic factor on the Exterior of the body; it is therefore associated with exterior symptoms caused by invasion of Wind. Indeed, the presence of aversion to cold, fever (or being hot to the touch), and a Floating pulse are enough to diagnose an invasion of an external pathogenic factor.

Thus the Floating pulse is one of the main clinical signs of invasion of Wind. In fact, the 'Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases' says: '*A Floating pulse, stiffness and pain of the neck and aversion to cold are signs of the Greater-Yang pattern [invasion of Wind].*'²

The reason the pulse becomes floating in invasions of external pathogenic factors is that when the body is attacked by external evils, the Defensive Qi is attracted to the surface of the body (and the space between skin and muscles) to fight the external pathogenic factors. Thus, the increased Yang-Qi on the surface of the body is reflected in a more Yang pulse (i.e., Floating). However,

if the patient has a weak Defensive Qi and does not react well to the invasion of pathogenic factors, the pulse may not be Floating.

The Floating pulse is not found in exterior conditions only, but also occurs in interior ones. I shall therefore discuss the clinical significance of the Floating pulse, distinguishing between exterior and interior conditions (see the section [Combinations](#)).

Under the following conditions, a Floating pulse is normal and does not indicate a pathology:

- in an underweight person
- in very hot weather

FLOATING PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Invasion of external Wind
- Yin deficiency (interior conditions)
- Organ disease (interior conditions)
- Stomach prolapse (interior conditions)

c) Combinations

The clinical significance of the Floating pulse combined with other pulses must be differentiated according to interior or exterior conditions.

i) Exterior conditions

In exterior conditions the pulse should be Floating, and it is clearly accompanied by exterior symptoms, such as an aversion to cold and the presence of fever. The Floating pulse of exterior conditions can be combined with other qualities, as follows:

- **Floating-Full** indicates an External-Full condition found when the patient has a strong Defensive Qi.
- **Floating-Weak** indicates an External-Empty condition found when the patient has a weak Defensive Qi that does not react properly to the invasion of external pathogenic factors.
- **Floating-Slow** indicates an invasion of Wind-Cold with a prevalence of Wind.
- **Floating-Tight** indicates an invasion of Wind-Cold with a prevalence of Cold.
- **Floating-Empty** indicates an invasion of Summer Heat; this is more floating than the Floating-Empty pulse from Yin deficiency.
- **Floating-Slippery** indicates an invasion of Wind-Damp or Wind complicated by Phlegm.

ii) Interior Conditions

The Floating pulse can be found in interior conditions and is relatively common. In interior conditions, exterior symptoms, such as an aversion to cold and the presence of fever, are obviously absent. Thus, if we feel a Floating pulse, we should first establish whether the patient's condition is exterior or interior; this is easily done because an exterior condition presents with an acute onset of aversion to cold, fever, body aches, sore throat, etc. In the absence of such symptoms, the condition is interior and we must interpret the significance of the Floating pulse differently.

The Floating quality of the pulse in interior conditions is not as pronounced as it is in exterior ones. In exterior conditions, the pulse is clearly floating, like a piece of wood in water (as described above), and is rather resistant to pressure; in interior conditions, the Floating quality of the pulse is less pronounced and is not so resistant to pressure.



The Floating quality of the pulse in interior conditions is not as pronounced as in exterior conditions.

A Floating pulse in an interior condition associated with an emptiness at the deep level of the pulse generally indicates a potentially serious problem, often with severe Blood, Yin, or Essence deficiency. Thus, a relatively Floating pulse that is Empty at the deep level in interior conditions may be associated with anaemia, chronic asthma, cirrhosis of the liver, or cancer.

In addition, if the pulse is generally Weak and Deep but Floating in one particular position, there may be a problem (often organic rather than just energetic), with the organ corresponding to that position. For example, if the pulse is generally Weak and Deep in all positions except in the Heart position, where it is Floating, this may indicate heart disease.

The Floating pulse without strength in interior conditions may also be associated with prolapse of the stomach, in which case the pulse would also be Fine or Soggy.

If, in the absence of exterior symptoms, the pulse is Floating in all positions and, although it feels relatively hard on the superficial level, it disappears on pressure, this indicates that the person is overworking and pushing himself or herself to the limit. Dr Shen calls this condition 'Qi wild'.

WESTERN DISEASES POTENTIALLY INDICATED BY A FLOATING PULSE

- Floating-Empty: anaemia, chronic asthma, cirrhosis of the liver, cancer
- Floating in one position but Deep-Weak in all others: potential disease in that organ
- Floating-Fine or Floating-Soggy: prolapse of the stomach

The clinical significance of the Floating pulse in interior conditions needs to be interpreted according to its combinations.

- **Floating-Empty** is a relatively common pulse in interior conditions, and it indicates Yin deficiency. The Floating-Empty pulse is felt clearly and easily on the superficial level with very light pressure, but with a deeper pressure the pulse feels empty. However, the Floating-Empty pulse is not as floating as the Floating pulse of exterior conditions.

The emptiness of the pulse at the deep level clearly reflects the deficiency of Yin. On the other hand, its floating quality at the superficial level reflects the rising Yang that derives from Yin deficiency. The Floating-Empty pulse reflects a relatively advanced condition of Yin deficiency when this gives rise to Floating Yang and possibly Empty Heat. There are, of course, other pulse qualities that may indicate Yin deficiency, such as Fine, Leather or Minute.

- **Floating-Choppy** indicates severe Blood deficiency. What is the difference in the clinical significance between a Choppy pulse (which also indicates Blood deficiency) and a Floating-Choppy pulse? The latter indicates a more serious condition of Blood deficiency, to such an extent that there is some Empty Heat associated with it. Thus a woman with a Floating-Choppy pulse who is suffering from Blood deficiency may experience a feeling of heat in the face due to Empty Heat arising from Blood deficiency; this occurs only in women.
- **Floating-Hollow** pulse appears after a haemorrhage. If it is also Rapid, however, it may indicate a forthcoming haemorrhage.
- **Floating-Short** indicates severe deficiency of Qi.
- **Floating-Rapid** indicates a serious condition of severe Exhaustion (*Xu Lao*). Of course, this applies only if the Floating-Rapid pulse occurs in interior conditions; in the presence of exterior symptoms it indicates an invasion of Wind-Heat, and its clinical significance therefore is completely different.

- **Floating-Slippery-Rapid** indicates long-term retention of Phlegm-Heat, usually in the Lungs, and is seen in chronic bronchitis.
- **Floating-Weak** indicates Yin deficiency.

FLOATING PULSE COMBINATIONS IN INTERIOR CONDITIONS

- Floating-Empty: Yin deficiency
- Floating-Choppy: Severe Blood deficiency
- Floating-Hollow: Haemorrhage
- Floating-Short: Severe Qi deficiency
- Floating-Rapid: Severe exhaustion (*Xu Lao*)
- Floating-Slippery-Rapid: Chronic Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs
- Floating-Weak: Yin deficiency

d) Differentiation of similar pulse qualities

- **Soggy:** The Soggy pulse is soft, without strength, difficult to feel at the superficial level, and comparable to wet cotton wool, whereas the Floating pulse is easily felt at the superficial level and, although it decreases in strength when pressed harder, it is not as soft as the Soggy pulse. However, in interior conditions, the combined Floating-Weak pulse feels very similar to the Soggy pulse.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: Invasion of external Wind with dizziness and headache or invasion of Wind-Heat with mucus in the chest

Middle position: Deficiency of the Spleen with excess of the Liver

Rear position: Difficulty in urination and defecation

2. DEEP

a) Pulse description

The Deep pulse can be felt only at the middle and deep levels, especially the latter. It feels as if it were sunken underneath the muscle. It was also described in the old books as 'a stone in the water'.

The depth at which the pulse is felt needs to be correlated with the body-build of the patient; obviously, in obese patients the pulse will be deeper. Thus the description of the Deep pulse is relative; what feels deep in a thin person may be normal in an obese person.

b) Clinical significance

This pulse quality indicates simply that the condition is an interior one. A further interpretation of the clinical significance of this pulse must be based on the differentiation between a Deep-Full and a Deep-Weak pulse.

i) Deep-Full

The Deep-Full pulse denotes the presence of a pathogenic factor in the Interior; this could be Cold, Heat, Retention of Food, stagnation of Qi or Blood, or Accumulation of Water, depending on the combination with other pulse qualities.

ii) Deep-Weak

The Deep-Weak pulse quality indicates Yang deficiency and is very common.

DEEP PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Pathogenic factor in the Interior (Deep-Full)
- Yang deficiency (Deep-Weak)

c) Combinations

- **Deep-Weak**, a very common pulse quality, indicates Yang deficiency. This pulse is felt at the deep level with moderate pressure and feels weak.
- **Deep-Wiry** indicates stasis of Blood and a possible pathology of the Penetrating Vessel.
- **Deep-Wiry-Slow** indicates Blood stasis deriving from Cold, or stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel.
- **Deep-Slow** denotes interior Cold.
- **Deep-Rapid** indicates interior Heat.
- **Deep-Soggy-Slow** denotes Dampness in the interior, frequently with oedema.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Hidden:** The Hidden pulse, essentially the same as the Deep pulse, is an extreme case of it. The Deep pulse is sunken underneath the muscle and can be felt clearly with strong pressure, whereas the Hidden pulse is sunken near the bone and is difficult to feel even with strong pressure.
- **Firm:** The Firm pulse is a type of Deep pulse insofar as it can be felt only at the middle and deep levels. It is essentially a pulse that is Wiry at the middle and

deep levels (the Wiry pulse is superficial and is felt at all levels).

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: Phlegm or Phlegm-Fluids stagnating in the chest

Middle position: pain from Cold in the Middle Burner

Rear position: white spermatorrhea and diarrhoea or lumbago from Kidney deficiency and abdominal pain

3. SLOW

a) Pulse description

In olden times, the pulse was defined as slow in relation to the breathing cycles of the doctor. Thus a pulse was described as slow if it beat three times or less during the time it takes the doctor to breathe in and out; it was described as rapid if it beat five times or more during the same time. Obviously, this method relies on the doctor's being in good health; it would not work if the doctor suffered from chronic breathlessness! Although this method is not used any longer, the concentration on his or her own breathing focuses and relaxes the doctor's mind.

In modern times, the definition of a Slow or Rapid pulse is related to the pulse rate, which must be correlated to the age of the patient as follows:

Age	Rate
0-1	120/140
1-3	110
4-10	84/90
11-15	78/80
16-35	76
36-50	72/70
50+	68

Any pulse rate below these values is a Slow pulse. Of course, these values should not be adhered to rigidly; for example, a pulse rate of 74 in the 16 to 35 age range would be only very slightly slow and have no clinical significance.

b) Clinical significance

A Slow pulse almost always indicates a Cold pattern. A different interpretation of a Slow pulse is that it denotes a problem in the Yin organs, as opposed to the Rapid pulse, which indicates a problem in the Yang organs; however, this is a broad generalization and not that clinically relevant. Chapter 9 of the 'Classic of Difficulties' says: '*Rapid pulse indicates problems in the Yang organs, the Slow pulse problems in the Yin organs*'.³

The clinical significance of the Slow pulse depends on whether it is Full or Empty – a Slow and Full pulse indicates Full Cold, whereas a Slow and Empty pulse indicates Empty Cold deriving from Yang deficiency. A condition of Full Cold can last only a relatively short time (a matter of weeks or months) because interior Cold will eventually injure Yang, leading to Yang deficiency and therefore Empty Cold. For this reason, in clinical practice Empty Cold is more common than Full Cold because we generally see patients with chronic conditions.

If the pulse is very slow, beating only twice for each breath cycle, it is called a Harmful pulse; if it beats only once per each breath, it is called the Destroyed pulse. Both of these pulses, especially the latter, indicate extreme depletion of the internal organs and are always associated with serious conditions.

ii) Common Cold conditions manifesting with a Slow pulse

Common conditions that present with a Slow pulse are Stomach-Qi deficiency, Spleen-Yang deficiency, Heart-Yang deficiency, Kidney-Yang deficiency, deficiency of Gathering Qi (*Zong Qi*), Lung-Yang deficiency, Cold in the Stomach, Cold in the Uterus, abdominal masses, Cold-Phlegm, and Damp-Cold.

A Slow pulse in chronic conditions may also indicate a deficiency of the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*).

ii) Contradictory manifestations characterized by a Slow pulse and Heat symptoms

Very occasionally the Slow pulse occurs in combination with Heat symptoms; one of the reasons for this contradiction may be Damp-Heat because the Dampness itself may slow the pulse.

Of course, a contradiction between a Slow pulse and Heat symptoms may simply be due to the coexistence of Cold and Heat patterns. For example, the combination of Kidney-Yang deficiency with Damp-Heat in the Bladder is

CONDITIONS COMMONLY MANIFESTING WITH A SLOW PULSE

- Stomach-Qi deficiency
- Spleen-Yang deficiency
- Heart-Yang deficiency
- Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Deficiency of Gathering Qi (*Zong Qi*)
- Lung-Yang deficiency
- Cold in the Stomach
- Cold in the Uterus
- Abdominal masses
- Cold-Phlegm
- Damp-Cold

relatively common. Another possible common combination is Kidney-Yang deficiency with Liver-Yang rising.

In menopausal women, a simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang is very common. If the Kidney-Yang deficiency is more pronounced, the pulse may be Slow, but the Kidney-Yin deficiency will cause some Empty Heat signs, such as hot flushes and night-sweating.

In the context of acute febrile diseases of the Warm-Disease type, the pulse can be Slow with the pattern of Damp-Heat at the Defensive-Qi level.

A Slow pulse with Heat symptoms may also indicate the condition of True Cold and False Heat, but this is quite rare. Yet another possible explanation of a Slow pulse with Heat symptoms is Heat that is so intense it obstructs the circulation of Qi and makes the pulse Slow; however, this is also quite rare.

SITUATIONS GIVING RISE TO CONTRADICTIONARY SLOW PULSE AND HEAT SYMPTOMS

- Damp-Heat
- Coexistence of Cold and Heat patterns
- Simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang (with predominance of the latter)
- Damp-Heat at the Defensive-Qi level in Warm diseases
- True Cold and False Heat
- Intense Heat obstructing the circulation of Qi

iii) The Slow pulse and jogging

Dr Shen relates a Slow pulse always to a Heart disharmony and poor circulation; paradoxically, it also is often seen in people who jog a lot. According to Dr Shen, excessive jogging (in his opinion more than 4 miles a day) leads to a dilation of the blood vessels that eventually becomes permanent, thereby slowing the circulation so that the pulse becomes Slow.

A Slow pulse is relatively common in Western patients who are joggers. Indeed, when we feel a Slow pulse, the first question we should ask is whether the patient jogs regularly. However, this is not necessarily a 'false' sign that should be discounted, because it reflects the fact that excessive jogging injures Yang and leads to internal Cold. Therefore, although the Slow pulse should be taken into consideration, it is important also to bear in mind that it may be 'disguising' the presence of Heat.

iv) Situations that may cause a Slow pulse without involving Cold

The following life situations may cause a Slow pulse:

- old age
- after childbirth
- excessive consumption of fatty and sweet foods

A Slow pulse also appears when a patient is on beta-blockers; in this case it is a false sign and can be ignored.

c) Combinations

- **Slow-Floating** indicates invasion of exterior Wind-Cold with a prevalence of Wind.
- **Slow-Deep** indicates interior Cold (which may be Full or Empty, depending on whether the pulse is Full or Empty).
- **Slow-Slippery** denotes Cold Phlegm or Damp-Cold.
- **Slow-Choppy** indicates Blood deficiency and interior Cold deriving from it. (A Slow-Slippery pulse indicates a pathology of Qi, whereas a Slow-Choppy pulse indicates a pathology of Blood.)
- **Slow-Weak** denotes Empty Cold with Yang deficiency.
- **Slow-Full** denotes internal Cold and is often seen in chronic, painful conditions.
- **Slow-Wiry** indicates accumulation of Phlegm-Fluids or stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel.
- **Slow-Deep-Weak** may indicate Heart-Yang deficiency with symptoms of cold limbs, cold feeling, sweating, and depression.
- **Slow-Tight-Overflowing** indicates that the blood vessels are dilated. In a young person this is often due to excessive jogging, whereas in the elderly it may indicate hardening of the blood vessels.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Slowed-Down:** This pulse has four beats per breathing cycle, whereas the Slow pulse has three beats or fewer.

- **Knotted:** This pulse is slow and stops at irregular intervals, whereas the Slow pulse is regular.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: deficiency and Cold in the Upper Burner

Middle position: pain from Cold in the Middle Burner

Rear position: backache and leg ache with a feeling of heaviness from Kidney deficiency

4. RAPID

a) Pulse description

The Rapid pulse has six beats or more to each breathing cycle. In modern clinical practice a pulse is defined as being Rapid when it beats more times than the values indicated under the Slow pulse above. For example, a pulse rate of 82 in the age range of 16 to 35 indicates a Rapid pulse.

b) Clinical significance

The Rapid pulse always indicates Heat, which may be Full or Empty, depending on whether the pulse is Full or Empty. Typical examples of a pulse that is Rapid and of the Full type are Rapid-Wiry, indicating Liver-Fire, or Rapid-Slippery, indicating Phlegm-Fire.

Examples of a pulse that is Rapid and of the Empty type are Rapid-Fine, indicating Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat, or Rapid and Floating-Empty, also indicating Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat. It is important to stress that in Yin deficiency, a Rapid pulse indicates the presence of Empty-Heat rather than Yin deficiency itself; this is manifested by the pulse being either Fine or Floating-Empty. This is equivalent to the situation in tongue diagnosis when, in Yin deficiency, a Red tongue body indicates the presence of Empty-Heat rather than the presence of Yin deficiency itself, which would be manifested by the absence of coating.



Yin deficiency is indicated by a Floating-Empty pulse; it is only when it is in addition Rapid that Empty Heat is indicated.

As mentioned above under the Slow pulse, the 'Classic of Difficulties' relates the Rapid pulse to problems of the Yang organs, and the Slow pulse to problems of the Yin

organs. Of course, this is a broad generalization that suffers from exceptions (e.g., Liver-Fire may manifest with a Rapid pulse).

Common conditions that present with a Rapid pulse are Stomach-Heat, Heat in the Intestines, Lung-Heat, Liver-Fire, Heart-Fire, Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat, Phlegm-Heat, Damp-Heat and invasion of Wind-Heat. The Rapid pulse is also seen in the Liliu syndrome, described in [Chapter 3](#) of the 'Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet'.⁴

COMMON CONDITIONS MANIFESTING WITH A RAPID PULSE

- Stomach-Heat
- Heat in the Large Intestine
- Lung-Heat
- Liver-Fire
- Heart-Fire
- Empty Heat
- Phlegm-Heat
- Damp-Heat
- Invasion of Wind-Heat

In fevers, whether of internal or external origin, the pulse should be Rapid; if it is not, this is a serious sign.



In fevers, if the pulse is not Rapid, it is a bad sign.

There are a few situations in which a Rapid pulse does not indicate Heat because the clinical manifestations do not point to Heat. When we feel a Rapid pulse, it is important to check this against the tongue and the inside of the lower eyelids; in true conditions of Heat, the tongue will be Red and the inside of the lower eyelids will also be red.

The following are examples of situations in which the Rapid pulse does not correspond to Heat.

- **The pulse can become Rapid following an emotional upset**, such as a shock or an outburst of anger. Thus, if we see a patient whose clinical manifestations do not point to Heat and the pulse is Rapid, we should always ask whether the person has had an emotional upset recently (within hours or days). The 'Simple Questions', in [Chapter 17](#), says: 'A Rapid pulse may indicate that a person has suffered a sudden fright and the pulse will revert back to normal in three to four days.'⁵

- **The pulse can become Rapid when a person suffering from Qi and Blood deficiency works very hard, pushing himself or herself to the limit.** In such a case, the pulse becomes Rapid, manifesting an attempt by the body's Qi to cope with such demands. Dr J. H. F. Shen describes this situation as 'Qi wild' when the pulse is also Overflowing. The 'Complete Book of Jing Yue' confirms this by saying that one of the causes of a Rapid pulse may be Exhaustion (*Xu Lao*). If the pulse is Rapid and Big but also Empty, it may indicate severe exhaustion of Essence and Blood, which occur also without Empty Heat.
- **The pulse can become Rapid in advanced cases of cancer,** even in the absence of a Heat pattern. In a patient suffering from cancer, this is often a bad sign, indicating a poor prognosis and potentially a rapid spread of the cancer.
- **The pulse can become Rapid in extreme Qi deficiency,** again reflecting an attempt by the body's Qi to cope with its demands.
- **The pulse can become Rapid in Yin-Fire.** The concept of Yin-Fire was introduced by Li Dong Yuan in his famous 'Discussion on Stomach and Spleen' (*Pi Wei Lun*, 1249). According to Li Dong Yuan, irregular diet, overwork and emotional stress weaken the Stomach and Spleen and the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*). When the Original Qi declines, the Minister Fire becomes pathological and rises from the space between the Kidneys to harass the Heart and Pericardium; Li Dong Yuan called this Yin-Fire (not to be confused with Empty-Heat).

The pathological Minister Fire (i.e., Yin-Fire) 'displaces' the Original Qi because they both occupy the same space in between the Kidneys; for this reason, Li Dong Yuan says that the Yin-Fire is a 'thief' of the Original Qi. Thus, in this kind of pathology there may be some Cold symptoms and signs arising from a deficiency of the Original Qi (e.g., cold feet, a feeling of cold and a Pale tongue) and some Heat manifestations from the rising of the Yin-Fire (e.g., a feeling of heat in the face and a Rapid pulse). Arousal of the Yin-Fire is treated not by clearing Heat, but by tonifying the Original Qi with sweet and warm herbs: the representative formula for this is *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang* (Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction).

As Yin-Fire derives from a deficiency of the Original Qi, if the latter predominates, the pulse may be Slow rather than Rapid.

- **A Rapid pulse may also simply indicate nervous tension without any Heat.** This is usually found in people who are constitutionally nervous; these patients will most probably have a Heart crack on the tongue.

SITUATIONS WHEN THE PULSE IS RAPID FOR REASONS OTHER THAN HEAT

- Emotional upset
- Severe Qi and Blood deficiency from overwork
- Cancer
- Extreme Qi deficiency
- Yin-Fire
- Nervous tension

The following factors may also cause the pulse to become temporarily Rapid in the absence of Heat:

- vigorous physical exercise
- heavy meals
- alcohol
- smoking
- tea
- coffee
- fright
- emotional upsets
- certain herbs (e.g., Ma Huang [*Ephedrae sinica*] or Ren Shen [*Radix Panax Ginseng*])
- anaemia

c) Combinations

- **Rapid-Full** indicates the presence of Full Heat from Excess of Yang.
- **Rapid-Empty** indicates Empty Heat from deficiency of Yin.
- **Rapid-Floating** denotes invasion of external Wind-Heat.
- **Rapid-Deep** indicates interior Heat.
- **Rapid-Overflowing** indicates Full Heat, usually in the Stomach, Lungs, or Heart.
- **Rapid-Fine** denotes Empty Heat from Yin deficiency.
- **Rapid-Floating-Empty** indicates Empty Heat from Yin deficiency.
- **Rapid-Wiry** indicates Liver-Fire.
- **Rapid-Slippery** denotes Phlegm-Heat.
- **Rapid-Deep-Full** indicates interior Fire in the Stomach and the Intestines.
- **Rapid-Wiry-Big** indicates Blood-Heat. According to Dr Shen, this pulse may be seen when there is too much glucose or cholesterol in the blood.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Hasty:** The Hasty pulse is rapid and stops at irregular intervals, whereas the Rapid pulse is regular.
- **Hurried:** The Hurried pulse beats seven to eight times per breath cycle; it is regular and gives the sensation of being hurried and anxious. It feels extremely agitated and urgent.
- **Moving:** The Moving pulse is rapid and short; it is shaped like a bean and gives the impression of vibrating rather than pulsating. The Rapid pulse is simply rapid and does not have any of the above attributes.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: sore throat, tongue or mouth ulcers, vomiting of blood, cough, lung abscess

Middle position: Stomach-Fire on the right-Middle position, Liver-Fire on the left-Middle position

Rear position: nourish the Yin and clear Fire

5. EMPTY

a) Pulse description

The Empty pulse has no strength and disappears with light pressure, feeling empty; it is soft but also *relatively* big and distended at the superficial level.

b) Clinical significance

The Empty pulse indicates Qi deficiency at its beginning or middle stages; in chronic Qi deficiency, the Empty pulse will usually become Weak (see below). Because most of the patients we see suffer from chronic conditions that have gone beyond mere Qi deficiency, the classic Empty pulse is relatively rare. When discussing the clinical significance of the 'Empty' pulse, it is important to be precise about one's terminology – there is a difference between the classic 'Empty' pulse quality (as defined above), indicating purely Qi deficiency, and an Empty-type of pulse that encompasses a broad range of deficient pulses, such as Weak, Fine, Choppy, etc. It therefore is important, especially in training clinics, not to use the word 'Empty' in a loose sense but only to indicate a precise pulse quality.



Do not confuse the specific 'Empty' pulse quality with a generic, loosely defined 'empty type' of pulse.

The Empty pulse is most common on the Lung position, and in chronic conditions it may indicate Lung-Exhaustion (*Fei Xu Lao*).

If the pulse is Empty and relatively Floating and without strength in all three positions, especially of the left, it indicates Blood deficiency.

If the pulse is Empty and slightly Rapid in acute exterior syndromes, it indicates invasion of Summer-Heat.

EMPTY PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Qi deficiency
- Blood deficiency (slightly Floating)
- Summer-Heat (slightly Rapid)

c) Combinations

- **Empty-Floating** without strength indicates Blood deficiency.
- **Empty-Rapid** in exterior syndromes may denote invasion of Summer-Heat.
- **Empty-Rapid** in interior syndromes may indicate the rising of Yin-Fire from a deficiency of Original Qi, as described above under the Rapid pulse.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Weak:** The Weak pulse is slightly deeper than the Empty pulse and therefore requires a slightly harder finger pressure. It lacks the relatively big and distended quality of the Empty pulse, and it is also softer than the Empty pulse.
- **Choppy:** The Choppy pulse is deeper than the Empty pulse, it lacks its relatively big and distended quality, it is weaker than the Empty pulse and it lacks a wave. In contrast, the Empty pulse has a wave. The Choppy pulse also feels 'jagged', whereas the Empty pulse feels quite rounded.
- **Hollow:** The Hollow pulse is empty only at the middle level and can be felt at the superficial and deep levels; the Empty pulse is empty at the superficial level and is softer than the Hollow pulse.
- **Soggy:** The Soggy pulse is soft and without strength, but also slightly floating, whereas the Empty pulse is bigger and not floating.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: deficient Blood not nourishing the Heart

Middle position: abdominal distension, retention of Food and Qi stagnation

Rear position: atrophy or Painful Obstruction syndrome from steaming from the bones injuring Essence and Blood with deficiency in the Lower Burner

6. FULL

a) Pulse description

The Full pulse feels hard, full and long; it is felt easily at all levels and has a springy quality resistant to finger pressure.

b) Clinical significance

The Full pulse simply indicates the presence of a Full pattern: its precise clinical significance can be deduced only from its combination with other qualities. When discussing the clinical significance of the 'Full' pulse, it is important to be precise about terminology; there is a difference between the classic 'Full' pulse (as defined above), indicating purely a Full condition, and a Full-type of pulse that encompasses a broad range of full pulses, such as Wiry, Slippery, Tight, Big, Overflowing, etc. It therefore is important, especially in training clinics, not to use the word 'Full' in a loose sense, but rather only to indicate a precise pulse quality.

A proper identification of the Full pulse is essential to determine the correct principle of treatment in chronic conditions that are usually characterized by the simultaneous presence of Full and Empty patterns. In such cases, we must have a clear idea in mind as to what our treatment strategy should be; that is, to tonify the body's Qi or to expel pathogenic factors. When we are confronted by these alternative treatment strategies, the pulse quality is extremely important in deciding which one to choose; if the pulse is Full, it is usually better to concentrate our attention on expelling pathogenic factors, even if the condition is chronic.

Chronic fatigue syndrome is a case in point. In this condition there is nearly always a Deficiency (usually of Qi) and an Excess (usually of Dampness). I often base my decision whether to tonify Qi or resolve Dampness

on the pulse quality; if it is Full or the full type, I start by resolving Dampness rather than tonifying Qi. The same principle applies to any chronic conditions manifesting with a simultaneous Deficiency and Excess.

Common conditions presenting with a Full pulse are Heart-, Stomach- or Liver-Fire, retention of Food, Phlegm, Full Cold, and stagnation of Qi and/or Blood.

COMMON CONDITIONS MANIFESTING WITH A FULL PULSE

- Heart-, Stomach- or Liver-Fire
- Retention of Food
- Phlegm
- Full Cold
- Stagnation of Qi and/or Blood

c) Combinations

- **Full-Rapid** indicates Full-Heat.
- **Full-Slow** indicates Full-Cold.
- **Full-Tight** denotes Full-Cold.
- **Full-Slippery** indicates Phlegm.
- **Full-Long** indicates Heat.
- **Full-Wiry** indicates a Full Liver pattern.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Overflowing:** the Overflowing pulse is large, long and relatively floating, and it decreases in strength when pressed heavily. The Full pulse is not so long, not so floating, and does not decrease in strength when pressed heavily.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: invasion of Wind-Heat in the head and face, sore throat, stiff tongue, feeling of fullness in the chest

Middle position: Heat in the Spleen, abdominal distension and fullness

Rear position: backache, abdominal pain, constipation

7. SLIPPERY

a) Pulse description

The Slippery pulse feels slippery, or 'oily': it is rounded, 'slips' or slides under the finger, and flows smoothly. In

ancient times, it was described as feeling like ‘pearls rolling in a basin’ or ‘raindrops rolling on a lotus leaf’. Students can get a good idea of what a Slippery pulse is by feeling the pulse of a pregnant woman in an advanced stage of pregnancy; most probably, the pulse will be very Slippery (if it is not, that is a bad sign).

b) Clinical significance

The Slippery pulse indicates primarily Phlegm or Retention of Food; it may also indicate Blood stasis. Generally speaking, the Slippery pulse is full by definition, indicating the presence of Phlegm; however, it may also be combined with empty types of pulse, reflecting the simultaneous deficiency of Qi and the presence of Phlegm (which usually derive from Qi deficiency).

Although the Slippery pulse is traditionally associated with Phlegm, it may also be seen in cases of chronic Dampness; for example, it is very common in chronic cases of chronic fatigue syndrome, which shows clear manifestations of Dampness.

It is normal for the pulse to become Slippery during pregnancy, and indeed, it indicates a healthy pregnancy. Conversely, if the pulse is not Slippery during pregnancy, this is not a good sign and it may indicate impending problems. In such cases the woman should be treated even in the absence of symptoms. In particular, there are certain pulse qualities that are undesirable during pregnancy, such as Choppy, Wiry, Fine, Weak, Leather and Hollow, all of which may indicate the possibility of miscarriage.

According to some Chinese sources, a Slippery pulse that is Slowed-Down and relatively soft indicates health.

Common conditions manifesting with a Slippery pulse include a whole range of diseases characterized by Phlegm in all of its manifestations: Phlegm-Heat, Cold-Phlegm, Damp-Phlegm, Wind-Phlegm, etc. In the organs, Phlegm can be retained primarily in the Lungs, Stomach and Heart (non-substantial Phlegm misting the Mind). Phlegm in the Lungs is extremely common, and a good example of a Slippery pulse is that felt in a patient with acute or chronic bronchitis.

Conditions other than Phlegm, such as Damp-Heat or retention of Food, may also lead to a Slippery pulse.

According to Dr Shen, when a Slippery quality is felt only in one position, it does not necessarily indicate Dampness or Phlegm. For example, he attributes the

following clinical significance to a Slippery quality in individual positions:

- Lungs: Phlegm
- Stomach: excessive acidity
- Bladder: disturbance of bladder function
- Heart: heart-valve problem
- Liver: disturbance of liver function
- Gall-Bladder: gall stones
- Kidney: kidney infection

SLIPPERY PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Phlegm
- Retention of Food
- Blood stasis
- Dampness (chronic)
- Pregnancy

c) Combinations

- **Slippery-Floating** indicates Wind-Phlegm.
- **Slippery-Deep** indicates Phlegm or Retention of Food.
- **Slippery-Rapid** indicates Damp-Heat or Phlegm-Heat.
- **Slippery-Slow** indicates Damp-Cold or Cold-Phlegm (often seen in diarrhoea).
- **Slippery-Big** denotes Phlegm-Heat with the predominance of Heat.
- **Slippery-Short** indicates Dampness or Phlegm against a background of Qi deficiency.
- **Slippery-Weak** indicates Dampness or Phlegm against a background of Qi deficiency.

Li Shi Zhen summarizes the combinations of Slippery pulses as follows:

- Slippery-Floating: Wind-Phlegm
- Slippery-Deep: Phlegm with retention of Food
- Slippery-Rapid: Phlegm-Fire
- Slippery-Slow: Retention of Food

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Moving:** the Moving pulse is rounded like the Slippery pulse, but it is also short and shaped like a bean, and it gives the impression of vibrating rather than pulsating.
- **Soggy:** the Soggy pulse is very slightly slippery, in addition to soft and relatively floating. The Slippery pulse is much fuller than the Soggy pulse and is not soft.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: Phlegm in the chest or diaphragm, vomiting, vomiting of sour fluids, stiff tongue, cough

Middle position: retention of Food, Heat in the Spleen and Liver

Rear position: diabetes, diarrhoea, hernia, Painful Urination syndrome

8. CHOPPY

a) Pulse description

The Choppy pulse feels rough, 'jagged' and short. It flows without a 'wave'; the normal pulse flows from the Rear position to the Front with a smooth and continuous movement, like a sea wave. The Choppy pulse lacks this continuous movement between the three positions and does not feel like a wave: this is an important difference from a normal pulse, because the Choppy pulse is felt within each position separately (Fig. 50.1).

For this reason, when deciding whether a pulse is Choppy or not, it is important to feel the pulse with three fingers to detect the presence or absence of the wave among the three positions. However, this does not mean that the pulse may not be Choppy in one position only.



The Choppy pulse must be felt with three fingers simultaneously.

There are many other ways of describing the Choppy pulse. First, it appears to be flowing vertically up and down rather than horizontally. It also gives the impression of coming and going, of being stagnant and not

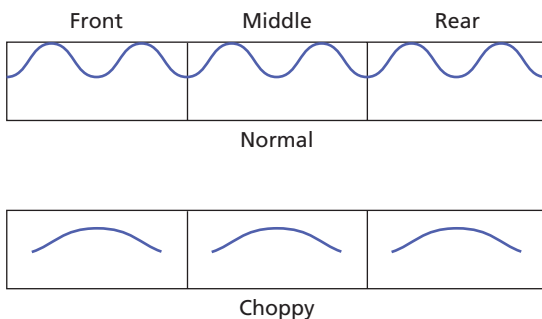


Figure 50.1. The Choppy pulse quality in relation to wave.

flowing properly. One description is '*the throb of the beat arrives but not all at once; it falls away but not immediately.*' Another characteristic of the Choppy pulse is that it may appear to change quality and strength as we feel it.

In ancient times the Choppy pulse was described as 'a knife scraping bamboo' or 'raindrops in the sand'. Some Chinese books describe this pulse as a '3-5 pulse', meaning that it changes rate frequently, sometimes beating three times and sometimes five times per respiration. Other authors say that the Choppy pulse combines three qualities: Slow, Fine and Short.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE CHOPPY PULSE QUALITY

- Rough, jagged and short
- Without a wave
- Gives the impression of flowing vertically rather than horizontally
- Gives the impression of coming and going
- Stagnant, not flowing properly
- The throb of the beat arrives but not all at once; it falls away but not immediately.
- It may change quality and strength as we feel it.
- Knife scraping bamboo
- Raindrops in the sand
- Changes rate frequently
- It is a combination of three qualities: Slow, Fine and Short.

b) Clinical significance

The Choppy pulse indicates a deficiency of Blood or Essence. It may also indicate loss of fluids occurring after profuse sweating, vomiting or diarrhoea. In a pregnant woman a Choppy pulse is always a bad sign, at the beginning of term indicating the possibility of miscarriage and towards the end of term indicating the possibility of eclampsia. In men, a Choppy pulse indicates deficiency of Essence, which may derive from excessive sexual activity.

Besides Blood deficiency, the Choppy pulse may indicate Blood stasis, but only when this occurs against a background of deficiency of Qi or Blood.

Generally speaking, the Choppy pulse is, of course, by definition the empty type. However, although the Choppy pulse is short, rough, jagged and lacking a wave, it can also be relatively Full. The word 'relatively' is important in the description of this pulse combination, because the Choppy-Full pulse is not nearly as full as the Full pulse. The Choppy and relatively Full pulse often indicates Blood stasis rather than Blood deficiency, frequently deriving from emotional problems.

The Choppy pulse generally indicates the patterns of Blood deficiency (especially in women), Essence deficiency (especially in men), and Blood stasis. The Choppy pulse is felt in Blood stasis only when this occurs against a Deficiency background. Common conditions presenting with these patterns and a Choppy pulse include heart disease, Chest Painful Obstruction syndrome, many menstrual disorders, post-natal disorders (e.g., depression) and cancer.

CHOPPY PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Blood deficiency
- Essence deficiency
- Body Fluids deficiency
- Blood stasis

c) Combinations

- **Choppy-Weak** indicates depletion of both Qi and Blood.
- **Choppy-Minute** indicates extreme Blood deficiency.
- **Choppy-Soggy** denotes Qi and Blood deficiency with some Dampness and is very common.
- **Choppy-Floating** indicates an invasion of external Wind occurring against a background of Qi and Blood deficiency.
- **Choppy-Deep** indicates chronic Blood deficiency.
- **Choppy-Full** may indicate Blood stasis.
- **Choppy-Knotted** indicates Blood stasis deriving from Yang deficiency and internal Cold.
- **Choppy-Fine** indicates deficiency of Body Fluids.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Weak:** the Weak pulse is deep, weak and soft but has a wave; the Choppy pulse is rough, jagged, not so soft, and lacks a wave.
- **Minute:** the Minute pulse is very fine, almost blurred, whereas the Choppy pulse is not so fine.
- **Fine:** the Fine pulse is thin but well-defined and with a wave; the shape of the Choppy pulse is less well defined and lacks a wave.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: Heart-Qi deficiency, pain in the chest

Middle position: Stomach and Spleen deficiency, hypochondrial distension

Rear position: injury of Essence and Blood, Painful Urination syndrome, constipation, blood in the stools.

EMPTY-TYPE PULSES

9. WEAK

a) Pulse description

Because the Weak pulse cannot be felt at the superficial level, it is by definition Deep. It feels soft and without strength. When discussing the clinical significance of the 'Weak' pulse, it is important to be precise about one's terminology; there is a difference between the classic 'Weak' pulse (as defined above), indicating purely Yang deficiency, and a weak-type of pulse that encompasses a broad range of deficient pulses, such as Empty, Fine, Choppy, Soggy, etc. It therefore is important, especially in training clinics, to use the word 'Weak' not in a loose sense, but rather only to indicate a precise pulse quality.



The Weak pulse is not just 'weak' but a precise pulse quality; it is extremely common.

b) Clinical significance

The Weak pulse indicates Yang deficiency; it is a very common pulse in chronic conditions, more so than the Empty pulse. However, it may also indicate Blood deficiency or deficiency of the Original Qi.

If the pulse is relatively Floating at the middle level and very Weak at the deep level, it indicates severe deficiency of Blood with collapse of the blood vessels.

According to Dr Shen, we can differentiate the Weak pulse at the superficial, middle or deep level. A Weak quality at the superficial level indicates Yang deficiency, and it may be due to overwork; if the pulse becomes Weak at the superficial level in the short term, it indicates lack of sleep. A Weak quality at the middle level indicates Blood deficiency, whereas a Weak quality at the deep level indicates Yin deficiency.

Common conditions presenting with a Weak pulse are Yang deficiency, Blood deficiency and deficiency of the Original Qi. These patterns, presenting with a Weak pulse, are common in many digestive diseases, menstrual disorders, profuse sweating, nocturnal emissions and haemorrhages.

WEAK PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Yang deficiency
- Blood deficiency
- Deficiency of Original Qi

c) Combinations

- **Weak-Choppy** indicates Blood deficiency.
- **Weak-Fine** indicates severe Blood deficiency.
- **Weak-Slow** indicates Yang deficiency.
- **Weak-Rapid** indicates bleeding from Qi deficiency.
- **Weak-Soggy** denotes Yang deficiency with some Dampness.
- **Weak-Floating** indicates Qi deficiency.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Empty:** the Empty pulse is soft, relatively big and can be felt at a superficial level, whereas the Weak pulse is thinner and can be felt only at the middle and deep levels.
- **Choppy:** the Choppy pulse is rough, jagged and lacks a wave; the Weak pulse is softer but has a wave.
- **Fine:** the Fine pulse is thin but distinct, whereas the Weak pulse is soft and has no distinct shape.
- **Soggy:** the Soggy pulse is soft and weak but also relatively floating, whereas the Weak pulse is not at all floating and cannot be felt on the superficial level.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: Yang deficiency

Middle position: Stomach and Spleen deficiency

Rear position: decline of Yang-Qi, exhaustion of Yin-Essence

10. FINE

a) Pulse description

The Fine pulse is thin and thread-like, but it is clear and straight, although soft. It feels like a fine line under the finger.

b) Clinical significance

The Fine pulse indicates primarily a severe deficiency of Blood, but also of Qi. In [Chapter 17](#), the 'Simple Questions' says: '*The Fine pulse indicates Qi deficiency.*'⁶ Compared with the Choppy pulse, the Fine pulse indicates a more severe deficiency of Blood. It may also indicate Yin deficiency.

The Fine pulse is obviously of the Empty type by definition, but it may be combined with Full-type qualities, such as Wiry or Tight. The Fine pulse with strength indicates Dampness. A Fine and Weak pulse in very young people indicates a constitutional deficiency of Original Qi.

The Fine pulse is a very common pulse quality, mostly appearing in Blood and/or Yin deficiency. Diseases commonly presenting with this pulse include digestive diseases, diarrhoea and menstrual disorders.

FINE PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Blood deficiency
- Qi deficiency
- Yin deficiency
- Dampness (Fine with strength)

c) Combinations

- **Fine-Rapid** indicates Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat.
- **Fine-Wiry** indicates Liver-Qi stagnation or Liver-Yang rising occurring against a background of Blood deficiency.
- **Fine-Tight** indicates Empty-Cold occurring against a background of Blood deficiency.
- **Fine-Choppy** indicates severe Blood or Essence deficiency.
- **Fine-Deep** indicates retention of Dampness, often seen in Painful Obstruction syndrome.
- **Fine-Weak** indicates severe Blood deficiency, and it is often seen in night-sweating.

According to Dr Shen, a Fine-Weak pulse in a middle-aged person means that he or she has overworked or over-exercised between the ages of 15 and 20.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Choppy:** the Choppy pulse is rough and jagged, lacks a wave and is rather indistinct; the Fine pulse is thin but clear and distinct and has a wave.

- **Minute:** the Minute pulse is nothing but an extreme case of Fine pulse; it is simply thinner than the Fine pulse.
- **Weak:** the Weak pulse is softer and less well defined than the Fine pulse; it is also missing at the superficial level, whereas the Fine pulse can be felt at the superficial level.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: chronic vomiting

Middle position: abdominal distension, Stomach and Spleen deficiency

Rear position: Cold in the Lower Burner, diarrhoea, nocturnal emissions

11. MINUTE

a) Pulse description

The Minute pulse is very thin, almost blurred; it is basically an extreme case of a Fine pulse and is almost imperceptible under the finger.

b) Clinical significance

The Minute pulse indicates severe deficiency of Blood, Essence, or Yin; it may also indicate deficiency of the Original Qi. It is only seen in chronic conditions, and it indicates a poor prognosis. It is often seen in cancer.

Common conditions that present with a Minute pulse include haemorrhages, spontaneous sweating, nocturnal emissions, chronic diarrhoea, menstrual diseases, collapse of Yang and chronic vomiting.

MINUTE PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Severe Blood deficiency
- Yin deficiency
- Essence deficiency

c) Combinations

- **Minute-Rapid** indicates Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat.
- **Minute-Slow** indicates severe Qi and Blood deficiency with internal Cold.

- **Minute-Choppy** indicates exhaustion of Blood.
- **Minute-Soggy** indicates Qi and Blood deficiency with some Dampness.
- **Minute-Deep** indicates Yin deficiency.
- **Minute-Wiry** indicates Liver-Yang rising occurring against a background of severe Blood deficiency.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Fine:** the Minute pulse is nothing but an extreme case of Fine pulse; it is simply thinner than the Fine pulse.
- **Weak:** the Weak pulse is Deep and soft but not so thin and imperceptible as the Minute pulse.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: breathlessness and palpitations

Middle position: abdominal distension and fullness, Stomach and Spleen deficiency

Rear position: deficiency of Blood, exhaustion of Essence, diabetes, abdominal pain

12. SOGGY (WEAK-FLOATING)

a) Pulse description

The Soggy (also called Weak-Floating) pulse can only be felt at the superficial level; it is relatively floating, but weak and soft, like wet cotton wool or wet bread. It disappears when a stronger pressure is applied. In Chinese it is called *ru*, which means 'sodden', but also *ruan*, which means 'soft'.

In my previous books I call this pulse quality 'Weak-Floating', which describes well its characteristic of being weak and soft, but also slightly floating.

b) Clinical significance

The Soggy pulse indicates chronic Qi deficiency with retention of Dampness. It is a relatively common pulse quality in chronic conditions with Dampness, such as post-viral fatigue syndrome. The Soggy pulse also indicates Stomach-Qi deficiency.

Common conditions presenting with a Soggy pulse are digestive disorders, chronic fatigue syndrome, asthma, nocturnal emissions and diarrhoea.

SOGGY PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Chronic Qi deficiency with Dampness

c) Combinations

- **Soggy-Fine** indicates severe Spleen-Qi deficiency with chronic retention of Dampness.
- **Soggy-Choppy** indicates exhaustion of Blood.
- **Soggy-Floating** denotes deficiency of Defensive Qi.
- **Soggy-Wiry** denotes Dampness with Liver-Qi stagnation.
- **Soggy-Rapid** indicates Damp-Heat.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Empty:** the Empty pulse feels soft but relatively big and floating, whereas the Soggy pulse is thinner, weaker, softer and less floating.
- **Weak:** the Weak pulse is soft and can be felt only at the deep level, whereas the Soggy pulse is also soft but can be felt at the superficial level.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: decline of Yang-Qi with incessant sweating

Middle position: deficiency of Central Qi

Rear position: injury of Essence and Blood, deficient Cold in the Lower Burner; to bring about an improvement, warm and tonify the true Yin

13. SHORT

a) Pulse description

The Short pulse does not fill a pulse position. Within each position it can be felt in the centre, but it tapers off at the head and tail. The Short pulse is more commonly felt in the Front and Middle positions, especially the former.

b) Clinical significance

The Short pulse indicates severe deficiency of Qi, especially of the Lungs and Heart. Common patterns

that present with a Short pulse are Lung-Qi deficiency, Heart-Qi deficiency, Stomach-Qi deficiency and deficiency of Qi and Blood.

SHORT PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Severe deficiency of Qi (of Lungs, Heart or Stomach)

c) Combinations

- **Short-Floating** indicates Lung-Qi deficiency.
- **Short-Choppy** denotes Heart-Qi deficiency.
- **Short-Rapid** indicates severe Heart-Blood deficiency with Empty-Heat.
- **Short-Slow** indicates Yang deficiency with internal Cold.
- **Short-Deep** indicates accumulation in the Interior with Spleen deficiency.
- **Short-Hasty** indicates stagnation of Qi with non-substantial Phlegm or retention of Food.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Moving:** the Moving pulse is short, shaped like a bean, rapid and gives the impression of vibrating rather than pulsating. The Short pulse shares with the Moving pulse only the characteristic of being short.
- **Empty:** the Empty pulse is soft, relatively floating and, like the Short pulse, indicates Qi deficiency. The Short pulse is neither soft nor floating.
- **Weak:** the Weak pulse is soft and can be felt only at the middle and deep levels, but it is not short. The Short pulse can be felt at all levels.
- **Hidden:** the Hidden pulse is very deep and difficult to feel, but it occupies its normal pulse position, whereas the Short pulse does not fill its pulse position.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Not given.

14. HOLLOW

a) Pulse description

The Hollow pulse can be felt at the superficial and deep levels but not at the middle level. As its name implies, it

is hollow, like an onion stalk. This pulse also feels quite solid on the sides of the fingers when rolling the fingers from side to side.

b) Clinical significance

The Hollow pulse indicates loss of Blood, and it appears after a haemorrhage. It should be stressed that this indicates a pathological haemorrhage and not, for example, the normal menstrual bleeding. It may also appear after a profuse loss of fluids from sweating, vomiting, or diarrhoea. If the pulse is Hollow and Rapid, it may indicate a *forthcoming* haemorrhage. The Hollow pulse is not common.

HOLLOW PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Loss of blood
- Loss of fluids

c) Combinations

- **Hollow-Floating** indicates injury of Qi and Yin.
- **Hollow-Rapid** indicates Yin deficiency with Empty Heat or an impending haemorrhage.
- **Hollow-Empty-Soggy** indicates loss of Essence or depletion of Blood.
- **Hollow-Knotted** indicates Yang deficiency or Blood stasis.
- **Hollow-Slow** indicates loss of Blood and injury of the Upright Qi.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Choppy**: the Choppy pulse is generally empty, rough and without a wave, whereas the Hollow pulse has a definite shape and a wave but is empty only at the middle level.
- **Empty**: the Empty pulse is relatively superficial and soft and disappears with a relatively light pressure. The Hollow pulse is neither superficial nor soft; it disappears with a stronger pressure but has more shape than the Empty pulse.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Not given.

15. LEATHER

a) Pulse description

The Leather pulse can be felt at a superficial level, stretched like the skin of a drum and empty at the deep level; it feels hard on the outside but empty inside, like a drum.

b) Clinical significance

The Leather pulse indicates severe deficiency of Blood, Essence, or Yin. It also indicates Qi floating upwards because it is not rooted by Blood.

Common patterns presenting with a Leather pulse include depletion of Blood and/or Yin, and these may appear in habitual miscarriage, menorrhagia and nocturnal emissions. In my experience, the Leather pulse is frequently felt in advanced cases of multiple sclerosis.

LEATHER PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Severe deficiency of Blood
- Severe deficiency of Essence
- Severe deficiency of Yin

c) Combinations

- **Leather-Rapid** indicates severe deficiency of Yin with Empty Heat.
- **Leather-Slow** indicates severe Blood deficiency with Blood stasis.
- **Leather-Choppy** denotes severe Blood deficiency.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Choppy**: the Choppy pulse is rough, jagged and lacks a wave but is not felt clearly at the superficial level. The Leather pulse, which like the Choppy pulse indicates Blood deficiency, feels relatively hard at the superficial level; at the deep level, it is more empty than the Choppy pulse.
- **Hollow**: the Hollow pulse is empty in the middle and can be felt clearly at the superficial and deep levels, whereas the Leather pulse cannot be felt at the deep level. Another difference is that the Leather pulse feels relatively hard and stretched at the superficial level, which the Hollow pulse does not.

- **Floating-Empty:** the Floating-Empty pulse and the Hollow pulse share the common characteristic of being empty at the deep level. However, the Floating-Empty pulse is relatively soft at the superficial level, or at least much softer than the Leather pulse, which feels hard and stretched at the superficial level.
- **Wiry:** the Leather pulse has a slightly Wiry quality on the surface, but it disappears on pressure, whereas the Wiry pulse is Wiry at all levels and does not disappear on pressure. The Leather pulse, although hard on the superficial level like the Wiry pulse, feels more 'flat' on the superficial level than the Wiry pulse.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Not given.

16. HIDDEN

a) Pulse description

The Hidden pulse is simply an extreme case of a Deep pulse; it is deeper than the Deep pulse and can be felt only with a very strong pressure at a very deep level near the bone.

b) Clinical significance

The clinical significance of the Hidden pulse is similar to that of the Deep pulse; it simply means that the condition is an interior one, and its clinical significance depends on its association with other qualities, especially the Full or Empty ones.

However, the Hidden quality always indicates a 'blockage' in the Interior, especially when it is the full type. 'Blockage' in this case means that a pathogenic factor is lodged deep in the interior of the body. It is 'locked' inside and difficult to expel. For example, depending on its association with other qualities, the Hidden pulse could indicate 'blocked' stagnation of Qi, 'blocked' Blood stasis, 'blocked' Heat in the Interior, 'blocked' Cold, 'blocked' chronic pain, 'blocked' Phlegm or 'blocked' retention of Food. The most important distinction to make is whether the Hidden pulse is the full or empty type.

When the Hidden pulse is also the empty type, it indicates severe Yang deficiency.



The Hidden pulse often indicates that a pathogenic factor is 'blocked' deep inside the body. Examples of such pathogenic factors are Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Heat, Cold, Phlegm or retention of Food.

Common conditions presenting with a Hidden pulse include digestive diseases, Blood stasis, abdominal masses, heart disease and vomiting.

According to Dr Shen, the Hidden pulse in apparently healthy people indicates a lifestyle of over-indulging in drugs and sexual activity. He pinpoints the age to which this lifestyle refers according to the degree of the Hidden pulse. If the pulse is very Hidden, it indicates that that lifestyle occurred between birth and 15; if it is slightly less Hidden, between 15 and 20; if even less Hidden, after age 20.



According to Dr Shen, the Hidden pulse in a seemingly healthy person may indicate over-indulgence in drugs and excessive sexual activity in the past.

HIDDEN PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS

- Pathogenic factor in the Interior (Hidden-Full)
- Severe Yang deficiency (Hidden-Weak)

c) Combinations

- **Hidden-Full** indicates Qi and Blood stagnation, retention of Food, or internal Cold or internal Heat, depending on whether the pulse is Slow or Rapid.
- **Hidden-Empty** indicates severe Yang deficiency with internal Cold.
- **Hidden-Rapid** indicates interior Heat, which may be Full- or Empty-Heat, depending on whether the pulse is full or empty.
- **Hidden-Slow** indicates interior Cold.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Deep:** the Deep and Hidden pulses are not significantly different because the Hidden pulse is simply an extreme case of Deep pulse.
- **Short:** the Hidden pulse is very deep and difficult to feel, but it occupies its normal pulse position, whereas the Short pulse does not fill its pulse position.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: retention of Food in the chest, stagnation of Qi, retching, uncomfortable sensation in the heart region

Middle position: abdominal pain, feeling of heaviness of the body, weakness

Rear position: severe hernia pain

17. SCATTERED

a) Pulse description

The Scattered pulse feels as if it were 'broken' into many tiny dots instead of flowing smoothly. It is relatively superficial, but it disappears easily with pressure.

b) Clinical significance

The Scattered pulse indicates a severe and advanced stage of Qi and Blood deficiency, particularly of Kidney-Qi and of the Original Qi. It is a pulse that always indicates a serious condition.

In pregnancy, the Scattered pulse indicates the likelihood of an imminent miscarriage, whereas before delivery, it indicates that the labour may be long and difficult. After childbirth, it indicates severe depletion of Blood, and the woman should be treated, even in the absence of symptoms, to prevent collapse of Blood.

Common conditions presenting with a Scattered pulse include heart disease, digestive disorders, miscarriage and asthma.

SCATTERED PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Severe Qi-Blood deficiency
- Severe Kidney deficiency
- Severe deficiency of Original Qi

c) Combinations

- **Scattered-Slow** indicates severe Qi and Yang deficiency.
- **Scattered-Rapid** denotes severe Blood deficiency with Empty Heat.
- **Scattered-Floating** indicates severe deficiency of the Original Qi with floating of Yang or with Yin-Fire.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Empty:** the Empty pulse and the Scattered pulse share the characteristic of being relatively superficial and of disappearing when more pressure is applied. The Empty pulse has more shape and flows more smoothly than the Scattered pulse; although obviously empty, the Empty pulse has much more 'body' than the Scattered pulse. In addition, the Scattered pulse, unlike the Empty pulse, feels as if it were broken into tiny dots.
- **Choppy:** the Choppy pulse and the Scattered pulse share the characteristic of feeling 'rough' and not flowing smoothly. However, the Choppy pulse has more shape than the Scattered pulse.
- **Fine:** the Fine pulse is simply thinner than normal, but it can be felt clearly and flows relatively smoothly, whereas the Scattered pulse does not flow smoothly and has no clear shape.
- **Minute:** the Minute pulse is extremely thin but can be felt clearly and flows relatively smoothly, whereas the Scattered pulse does not flow smoothly and has no clear shape.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: left-Front, anxiety and palpitations; right-Front, sweating

Middle position: left-Middle, Phlegm-Fluids in the limbs; right-Middle, twitching of the legs, oedema

Rear position: decline of Original Qi

FULL-TYPE PULSES

18. WIRY

a) Pulse description

The Wiry pulse feels superficial and hard; it can be felt very clearly at every level. At the superficial level, it 'hits' the finger with its force. Thus, one of the attributes of the Wiry pulse is that it is superficial.

It is often compared with the taut string of a musical instrument; if we try to push it down, it 'springs' back up. This is a common pulse in clinical practice, and one that is relatively easy to distinguish; because it is superficial, hard and springy, it manifests itself easily without the practitioner having to concentrate on feeling it.

b) Clinical significance

The Wiry pulse is extremely common. The chief clinical significance of the Wiry pulse is that it indicates any of the Full-type of Liver disharmonies, such as Liver-Qi stagnation, Liver-Blood stasis, Liver-Yang rising, Liver-Fire, Liver-Wind.

A Wiry pulse may also indicate the presence of chronic Phlegm, and it is usually seen in old people. Finally, the Wiry pulse may also indicate chronic pain, even if that pain does not derive from a Liver disharmony. For example, if a patient has been suffering from chronic sciatica on the Bladder channel, the left-Rear pulse position may become Wiry.



The Wiry pulse does not denote only Liver disharmonies; it may also indicate long-standing retention of Phlegm.

The Wiry pulse is the Full type by definition, but it may be seen in Empty conditions as well, combining with Empty-type pulse qualities. For example, a relatively common clinical finding is a pulse that is Fine in general but also Wiry on the left in a patient suffering from Blood deficiency and Liver-Yang rising. A Wiry but relatively Weak pulse, or a pulse that is Wiry on the left and Weak on the right, indicates Stomach and Spleen deficiency, with stagnation of Cold or rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach; such patterns manifest with sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting, epigastric pain, hiccups and belching.

It is normal for the pulse to be relatively Wiry in the Spring. The 'Simple Questions', in Chapter 19, says, *'Spring is the season of the Liver; it pertains to East and Wood. Everything grows during this season; when the Qi of the Spring arrives the pulse should be relatively soft, weak, light, slippery and long, all of which explain why it is called Wiry. The opposite of this indicates disease.'*⁷

Common conditions that present with a Wiry pulse are menstrual pain, pre-menstrual tension, depression, anxiety, chronic Phlegm, chronic pain and mental illness.

WIRY PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS

- Liver disharmony
- Phlegm
- Chronic pain

c) Combinations

- **Wiry-Rapid** indicates Liver-Fire.
- **Wiry-Slow** indicates stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel or rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach.
- **Wiry-Slippery** indicates the simultaneous presence of a Full Liver pattern and Phlegm; this is a relatively common pulse combination.
- **Wiry-Long** indicates stagnation of Liver-Qi or stasis of Liver-Blood.
- **Wiry-Deep** indicates chronic Phlegm.
- **Wiry-Fine** indicates a Full Liver pattern (often Liver-Yang or Liver-Wind) occurring against a background of Blood deficiency.
- **Wiry-Tight** indicates Blood stasis.
- **Wiry-Big** indicates Liver-Fire or Liver-Yang rising.
- **Wiry-Overflowing** denotes Liver-Fire.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Tight:** the Tight pulse and the Wiry pulse share the common characteristic of feeling hard under pressure and being 'springy'. The two main differences are that the Tight pulse is thicker than the Wiry pulse and feels like a rope rather than the string of a musical instrument, and that the Wiry pulse is more superficial than the Tight pulse and hits the finger more forcefully.
- **Firm:** the Firm pulse can be felt only at the middle and deep levels and feels hard. The Wiry pulse also feels hard, but it is more springy and can be felt clearly at the superficial level as well. In other words, the Firm pulse is a pulse that is Wiry, but only at the Middle and Deep levels.
- **Leather:** the Leather pulse has a slightly Wiry quality on the surface, but it disappears on pressure, whereas the Wiry pulse is Wiry at all levels and does not disappear on pressure. The Leather pulse, although hard on the superficial level like the Wiry pulse, feels more 'flat' on the superficial level than the Wiry pulse.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: headaches, Phlegm in chest and diaphragm

Middle position: left-Middle alternation of chills and fever, abdominal masses; right-Middle Cold in Stomach and Spleen, chest and abdominal pain
Rear position: hernia pain, stiffness of legs

19. TIGHT

a) Pulse description

The Tight pulse is hard and feels like a rope being twisted; it is strong and has a springy feeling when the pressure is released, although not as springy as the Wiry pulse.

b) Clinical significance

In general, the Tight pulse indicates Cold and can be found in many different conditions.

In external invasions of Wind, the Floating-Tight pulse indicates the invasion of Wind-Cold with the prevalence of Cold (Greater Yang Pattern – Prevalence of Cold within the Identification of Patterns according to the six Stages).

In internal conditions a Tight pulse indicates Cold, usually Full-Cold, although it can be combined with an Empty-type pulse quality in conditions of Empty-Cold. Like the Wiry pulse, it may indicate chronic pain, usually from Cold.

The Tight pulse is also frequently seen in asthma when this condition is associated with Cold in the Lungs.

The Tight pulse is also frequently seen in digestive disorders characterized by the presence of Cold and/or Retention of Food in the Stomach and Spleen with nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.

The Tight pulse is frequently combined with a Slippery pulse in the presence of Cold-Phlegm.

The Tight pulse may also indicate Cold in the Blood.

Common conditions presenting with a Tight pulse include chronic pain, digestive disorders, invasion of Cold, menstrual pain, diarrhoea from Cold, asthma and arteriosclerosis.

TIGHT PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS

- Internal Cold
- Invasion of external Wind-Cold
- Chronic pain
- Cold in the Blood

c) Combinations

- **Tight-Floating** indicates invasion of Wind-Cold with the prevalence of Cold.
- **Tight-Deep** indicates internal Full-Cold.
- **Tight-Full** indicates chronic pain from Cold.
- **Tight-Fine** denotes Empty-Cold occurring against a background of Stomach and Spleen deficiency.
- **Tight-Overflowing** indicates ulcers or carbuncles.
- **Tight-Choppy** is seen in chronic Painful Obstruction syndrome from Cold.
- **Tight-Slippery** denotes Cold Phlegm and is common in asthma.
- **Tight-Firm** indicates Blood stasis from Cold.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Wiry:** the Tight pulse and the Wiry pulse share the common characteristic of feeling hard on pressure and being 'springy'. The two main differences are that the Tight pulse is thicker than the Wiry pulse and feels like a rope rather than the string of a musical instrument, and that the Wiry pulse is more superficial than the Tight pulse and hits the finger more forcefully.
- **Firm:** the Firm pulse is Full, Wiry and can be felt only at the Middle and Deep levels; the Tight pulse can be felt at all levels. The Tight pulse feels more 'knotted' (like a rope) than the Firm pulse.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: difference between left and right Front positions (Li Shi Zhen does not expand on this)

Middle position: severe chest and abdominal pain

Rear position: syndrome from excess Cold, Running Piglet syndrome, hernia pain

20. OVERFLOWING

a) Pulse description

The Overflowing pulse feels large under the finger, very superficial and broad. As its name implies, it is often described as feeling like a river flooding its banks because the pulse goes beyond its natural boundary in all directions.

b) Clinical significance

The Overflowing pulse indicates Heat, and it is nearly always rapid as well. Although the Overflowing pulse is Full by definition, to interpret its clinical significance we need to distinguish an Overflowing pulse with strength from one without strength.

Although, according to the theory, an Overflowing pulse indicates Heat by definition, there are situations in which it may be due to other causes, especially when it is found in only one position (some of these are described below). For example, an Overflowing quality on the Heart pulse may indicate emotional problems, not necessarily manifesting with Heat. Therefore, when we feel an Overflowing pulse, it is important to check this against the tongue and the inside of the lower eyelids; in true conditions of Heat, the tongue will be Red and the inside of the lower eyelids will also be red.

i) Overflowing with strength

The Overflowing pulse with strength always indicates Full-Heat, which may affect the Liver, Heart, Lungs or Stomach; in this case it is also rapid.

In the course of an acute febrile disease, the Overflowing pulse with strength is seen with Heat in the Stomach at the Qi level. In this case the Overflowing quality indicates that the Heat is overflowing from the main channels into the Connecting channels; in such a case, if the pulse is very Overflowing and very rapid, it indicates that the Heat is close to progressing to the Nutritive-Qi or Blood level and the possible development of macules. Thus, in the course of an acute febrile disease, an Overflowing quality often indicates that the condition is changing and progressing to the next level.

The Overflowing pulse quality is frequently felt in individual positions only, and in such cases it usually indicates Heat in that particular organ. However, its clinical significance in such cases may be slightly different, often indicating severe emotional problems. For example, if the pulse is Overflowing only on the Heart position, it definitely indicates that the patient is suffering from severe emotional problems affecting the Heart. If the pulse is Overflowing only on the Liver position, it indicates that the person is suffering from repressed anger, resentment or frustration; if it is Overflowing on the Lung position, it indicates that the patient is suffering from long-term unexpressed sadness and grief.

It is important to stress that when the pulse is Overflowing only in one position, it may be 'Overflowing'

only in relation to the other positions. For example, the pulse may be Weak in general and quite difficult to feel, but the pulse of the Heart position stands out as being more superficial and larger than the others; we would therefore interpret this Heart pulse as being 'Overflowing', but it would not be as overflowing as the classic Overflowing pulse.



The Overflowing pulse on individual positions indicates either Heat in that particular organ (tongue Red and pulse Rapid) or severe emotional problems related to that particular organ (Heart, Liver, Lungs).

ii) Overflowing without strength

The Overflowing pulse without strength feels large, superficial and flooding, but it disappears when more pressure is applied, and it has no strength at the deep level. Its strength indicates Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat and exhaustion of Body Fluids. In this respect, its clinical significance is the same as that of the Floating-Empty pulse, but it indicates a more severe stage of it and more intense Empty-Heat.

The pulse may also be Overflowing without strength *and* Floating, which indicates a condition of severe Yin deficiency, intense Empty-Heat and Qi rising to the top.

According to Dr Shen, an Overflowing-Hollow pulse is frequently seen in hypertension and diabetes; in the former condition, the pulse is Overflowing and Hollow more in the Front and Middle positions, whereas in the latter, more so in the Middle and Rear positions.

Common conditions that present with an Overflowing pulse include mental illness, febrile diseases and severe emotional problems.

OVERFLOWING PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Full Heat (Overflowing with strength)
- Stomach-Heat pattern at Qi Level
- Yin deficiency with Empty Heat (Overflowing without strength)

c) Combinations

- **Overflowing-Floating** indicates invasion of Wind-Heat with intense Heat: this condition would progress very rapidly to the Qi level.
- **Overflowing-Floating without strength** denotes severe Yin deficiency with Empty Heat.
- **Overflowing-Deep** indicates internal Heat.

- **Overflowing-Slippery** indicates Phlegm-Heat with prevalence of Heat.
- **Overflowing-Soft** indicates Yin deficiency with exhaustion of Body Fluids and Empty Heat.
- **Overflowing-Tight** indicates Chest Painful Obstruction syndrome or blood in the stools with constipation.
- **Overflowing-Hollow-Rapid with strength** indicates imminent bleeding.
- **Overflowing-Hollow-Weak** indicates a previous haemorrhage.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Big:** the Big pulse is very similar to the Overflowing pulse insofar as they are both superficial, large and going beyond the pulse boundary. The Big pulse, however, is 'rounder' than the Overflowing pulse, it has more shape, and it is not necessarily rapid.
- **Full:** the Full pulse simply indicates that the pulse is full and relatively hard, whereas the Overflowing pulse is larger than its boundary, more superficial and relatively softer.
- **Long:** the Long pulse extends beyond the pulse positions lengthwise and is not superficial. The Overflowing pulse extends beyond the pulse positions in all directions and is superficial.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Front position: left-Front, Heart-Fire blazing upwards; right-Front, feeling of heaviness in the chest

Middle position: Liver-Yang rising, Stomach and Spleen deficiency

Rear position: exhaustion of Kidney-Essence, deficiency of Yin with blazing Fire

21. BIG

a) Pulse description

The Big pulse is large, broad, overflowing from its boundary, and full. It is very similar to the Overflowing pulse, but it has more shape and is not necessarily rapid.

b) Clinical significance

The Big pulse generally indicates Heat, and its clinical significance is similar to that of the Overflowing pulse.

When we feel a Big pulse, it is important to check this against the tongue and the inside of the lower eyelids; in true conditions of Heat, the tongue will be Red and the inside of the lower eyelids will also be red. We need to differentiate the Big pulse with strength from the Big pulse without strength.

i) Big with strength

The Big pulse with strength indicates internal Heat, which may occur in the Heart, Liver, Lungs, or Stomach. In acute febrile diseases, it indicates Heat in the Stomach at the Qi level.

Common patterns presenting with a Big pulse with strength are acute febrile diseases at the Qi level, Liver-Fire, Heart-Fire, Heat in the Intestines and Phlegm-Fire, and these appear in conditions such as acute chest infections, intestinal infections, or heart disease.

ii) Big without strength

The Big pulse without strength indicates Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat or severe depletion of Blood. The 'Simple Questions', in [Chapter 17](#), says: '*The Big pulse indicates deficiency of Yin and excess of Yang with Empty-Heat.*'⁸

Common patterns presenting with a Big pulse without strength are severe Blood deficiency, Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat, and Blood deficiency with Liver-Yang rising. This pulse frequently appears in menstrual disorders and diabetes.

BIG PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS

- Full Heat (Big with strength)
- Yin deficiency with Empty Heat (Big without strength)

c) Combinations

- **Big-Deep** indicates internal Heat.
- **Big-Wiry** indicates Liver-Fire.
- **Big-Soggy** denotes Empty-Heat with Dampness.
- **Big-Overflowing** indicates Stomach-Heat.
- **Big-Full** indicates severe Qi stagnation.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Overflowing:** the Big pulse is very similar to the Overflowing pulse insofar as they are both superficial, large, and going beyond the pulse boundary. The Big pulse, however, is 'rounder' than the Overflowing

pulse, it has more shape, and it is not necessarily rapid.

- **Full:** the Full pulse simply indicates that the pulse is full and relatively hard, whereas the Big pulse is larger than its boundary, more superficial and relatively softer.
- **Long:** the Long pulse extends beyond the pulse positions lengthwise and is not superficial. The Big pulse extends beyond the pulse positions in all directions and is superficial.

e) Clinical significance in each position

This is the same as for the Overflowing pulse.

22. FIRM

a) Pulse description

The Firm pulse is felt only at the deep level; it feels hard, and it combines the qualities of Full, Wiry and Long. It is basically a pulse that is Wiry only at the middle and deep levels (the Wiry pulse can be felt clearly at all levels).

b) Clinical significance

The Firm pulse generally indicates internal Cold often causing chronic pain. It may also indicate accumulation in the Interior, stagnation of Qi or stasis of Blood. It is a pulse quality that is associated with abdominal masses or abdominal pain, and it may also indicate Blood stasis deriving from Cold.

A pulse that is Firm on all three positions of the right or on both Middle positions of left and right indicates Blood stasis and a pathology of the Penetrating Vessel.

The Firm pulse quality is relatively common, especially in women.

Common conditions presenting with a Firm pulse include Chest Painful Obstruction syndrome, convulsions, abdominal masses, abdominal pain, menstrual diseases and arteriosclerosis.

FIRM PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Internal Cold
- Blood stasis
- Stagnation in the Penetrating Vessel

c) Combinations

- **Firm-Tight** indicates internal Cold possibly with oedema.
- **Firm-Slow** indicates internal Cold and Blood stasis.
- **Firm-Choppy** denotes Blood stasis.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Wiry:** the Wiry pulse and the Firm pulse share similar characteristics of being hard, Full and Long. The main difference is that the Wiry pulse is felt clearly at all levels, whereas the Firm pulse is felt only at the middle and deep levels.
- **Tight:** the Tight pulse and the Firm pulse share similar characteristics of being hard and Full. The main difference is that the Tight pulse is felt clearly at all levels, whereas the Firm pulse is felt only at the middle and deep levels.
- **Full:** the Full pulse can be felt at all levels, whereas the Firm pulse can be felt only at the deep level.
- **Hidden:** the Hidden pulse is sunken beneath the muscles near the bone and is very difficult to feel, whereas the Firm pulse can be felt clearly at the middle and deep levels.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Not given.

23. LONG

a) Pulse description

The Long pulse is simply longer than normal; that is, it extends lengthwise beyond the pulse boundary. In order to judge whether a pulse is Long, normal or Short, it is important to roll the finger back and forth (distally and proximally) on each position.

b) Clinical significance

The Long pulse usually indicates Heat. It may also indicate a Liver disharmony of the Full-type with rebellious Qi, such as Liver-Yang rising or rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel.

The Long pulse may also indicate Phlegm. In [Chapter 18](#) the 'Simple Questions' says: 'If the Liver pulse is

relatively soft and feels like the tip of a long bamboo pole, it indicates a harmonious state of the Liver... If the Liver pulse is Full and Slippery and feels like moving along a long bamboo pole, it indicates Liver disease.¹⁹

If the pulse is Long, relatively soft, Slowed-Down, neither Floating nor Deep, neither Rapid nor Slow, neither Full nor Empty, it is a sign of health.

Common conditions that present with a Long pulse are Liver disease, hypochondrial pain, mental illness, rebellious Qi in the Penetrating vessel and haemoptysis.

According to Dr Shen, if the pulse is Long on one side and Short on the other, it indicates a serious problem. Usually the side displaying the Long quality is also Wiry, Fine and Rapid. For example, if the left-side pulse is Long-Wiry-Fine-Rapid and the right-side pulse is Short, this indicates that the person is extremely nervous and suffers from a Liver and Heart disharmony. If the right-side pulse is Long, Weak on the Lung position, Fine-Tight on the Middle and Rear positions, and Short on the left side, it indicates a Stomach disharmony and general deficiency of Qi.

LONG PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Heat
- Liver disharmony
- Phlegm
- Health (relatively soft, Slowed-Down, neither Floating nor Deep, neither Rapid nor Slow, neither Full nor Empty)

c) Combinations

- **Long-Rapid** indicates internal Heat.
- **Long-Slow** indicates stagnation of Qi.
- **Long-Floating** indicates invasion of external Wind-Heat.
- **Long-Deep** indicates internal Heat.
- **Long-Wiry** indicates a Liver disharmony of the Full-type.
- **Long-Slippery** indicates Phlegm-Heat.
- **Long-Overflowing** indicates excess of Yang and Heat.
- **Long-Firm** indicates internal accumulation.
- **Long-Overflowing-Hollow** may indicate hypertension or diabetes, according to Dr Shen.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Overflowing**: the Long pulse extends beyond the pulse positions lengthwise and is not superficial. The

Overflowing pulse extends beyond the pulse positions in all directions and is superficial.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Not given.

24. MOVING

a) Pulse description

The Moving pulse is short, Slippery and rapid, and it gives the impression of 'shaking' or 'vibrating' instead of pulsating. It is shaped like a bean without a head or tail. The Moving pulse is felt more frequently on the Front and Middle positions.

b) Clinical significance

The Moving pulse generally reflects severe emotional problems, particularly shock, fright or severe anxiety. In cases of shock, the pulse can remain Moving for years afterwards.

The Moving pulse may also indicate severe deficiency of Qi and Blood, often manifesting with cramps in the legs. The Moving pulse with strength may also indicate Qi stagnation.

MOVING PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Shock
- Severe deficiency of Qi and Blood
- Qi stagnation

c) Combinations

- **Moving-Rapid** indicates Heat occurring against a background of severe emotional problems.
- **Moving-Slippery** indicates severe deficiency of Qi and Phlegm.
- **Moving-Full** indicates chronic pain.
- **Moving-Empty** indicates severe depletion of Blood.
- **Moving-Weak** indicates shock.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Short**: the Moving pulse is short by definition, but in addition it is rapid, shaped like a bean, somewhat

Slippery and gives the impression of 'shaking' rather than pulsating.

- **Slippery:** the Moving pulse is Slippery by definition, but in addition it is Short, rapid, shaped like a bean, somewhat Slippery and gives the impression of 'shaking' rather than pulsating.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Li Shi Zhen

Not given.

PULSES WITH IRREGULARITIES OF RATE OR RHYTHM

25. KNOTTED

a) Pulse description

The Knotted pulse quality refers to the rhythm of the pulse; it denotes a pulse that is Slow and that stops at irregular intervals.

b) Clinical significance

The Knotted pulse indicates internal Cold with stagnation of Qi and Blood, and it always indicates a Heart disharmony (although, of course, the rate and rhythm of the pulse are the same in all positions). It is frequently seen in heart disease, such as coronary heart disease, angina pectoris, rheumatic heart disease, etc. A Knotted pulse can also come on after surgery. In young people, a Knotted pulse may indicate a constitutional deficiency of the Original Qi or a severe deficiency of Yang due to excessive physical work or excessive sexual activity during puberty.

We need to differentiate between the Knotted pulse with strength and the Knotted pulse without strength.

i) Knotted with strength

The Knotted pulse with strength may indicate several conditions, as follows:

- Severe Qi stagnation from Cold
- Chronic Phlegm stagnating in the Interior in old people
- Retention of Food
- Severe Qi stagnation from emotional problems
- Blood stasis
- Abdominal masses

ii) Knotted without strength

The Knotted pulse without strength may indicate a constitutional deficiency of the Original Qi, a deficiency of Kidney-Essence, possibly from excessive sexual activity, or a severe deficiency of Yang.

Common conditions presenting with a Knotted pulse include heart disease, coronary heart disease, angina pectoris and rheumatic heart disease.

KNOTTED PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Severe Qi stagnation from Cold
- Chronic Phlegm stagnating in the Interior in old people
- Retention of Food
- Severe Qi stagnation from emotional problems
- Blood stasis
- Deficiency of Original Qi (without strength)
- Deficiency of Essence (without strength)
- Heart disease

c) Combinations

- **Knotted-Choppy** indicates Blood stasis and may point to coronary heart disease.
- **Knotted-Slippery** indicates chronic retention of Phlegm and may point to rheumatic heart disease.
- **Knotted-Floating** indicates invasion of Cold in the Channels.
- **Knotted-Deep** indicates accumulation in the Interior.
- **Knotted-Wiry** indicates a disease of the arteries or hypertension.

d) Clinical significance in each position

- **Intermittent:** the Intermittent pulse stops at *regular* intervals and may be rapid, slow, or of normal rate, whereas the Knotted pulse is always slow and stops at *irregular* intervals.
- **Slow:** the Slow pulse and the Knotted pulse are both slow, but the Knotted pulse stops at irregular intervals.

e) Clinical significance in each position

This is not applicable because an abnormality in the speed or rate of the pulse will be the same in all positions.

26. HASTY

a) Pulse description

The Hasty pulse quality refers to the rhythm of the pulse; it denotes a pulse that is Rapid and stops at irregular intervals.

b) Clinical significance

The Hasty pulse indicates internal Heat, and it is always related to a Heart disharmony (although, of course, the rate and rhythm of the pulse are the same in all positions). The Hasty pulse may also indicate retention of Food or Phlegm occurring against a background of internal Heat or stagnation of Qi or Blood.

The Hasty pulse without strength indicates severe depletion of the Original Qi and a separation of Yin and Yang; this always indicates a serious condition, more so than the Knotted pulse without strength.

The Hasty pulse may also indicate rebellious Qi from anger.

Common conditions that present with a Hasty pulse are mental illness, chronic bronchitis with Phlegm-Heat, and heart disease.

HASTY PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Heat
- Severe depletion of Original Qi (without strength)
- Retention of Food with Heat
- Phlegm with Heat
- Severe stagnation of Qi and Blood

c) Combinations

- **Hasty-Overflowing** indicates Heat in the Stomach.
- **Hasty-Slippery** indicates long-standing retention of Phlegm-Heat.
- **Hasty-Wiry** indicates Liver-Fire and Heart-Fire.
- **Hasty-Slippery-Wiry** indicates Heart-Fire, Liver-Fire and Phlegm-Heat.
- **Hasty-Floating** indicates Heat in the Bright Yang.
- **Hasty-Fine** without strength indicates collapse of Heart-Qi.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Intermittent**: the Intermittent pulse stops at regular intervals and may be rapid, slow or of normal rate,

whereas the Hasty pulse is always rapid and stops at irregular intervals.

- **Rapid**: the Rapid pulse and the Hasty pulse are both rapid, but whereas the Rapid pulse is regular, the Hasty pulse stops at irregular intervals.

e) Clinical significance in each position

This is not applicable because an abnormality in the speed or rate of the pulse will be the same in all positions.

27. HURRIED

a) Pulse description

The Hurried pulse is rapid by definition, beating at least eight times for each breath cycle, and it gives the impression of being hurried, anxious, agitated and urgent.

b) Clinical significance

The Hurried pulse generally indicates severe deficiency of Yin with intense Empty-Heat: it always indicates a serious condition.

The Chinese name of this pulse quality, *Ji*, is the same as in *Li Ji*, or the symptomatology of Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel. Literally, *ji* means 'urgency', and in the context of this pathology, *Li Ji* indicates a feeling of energy rising from the abdomen to the throat, accompanied by a feeling of restlessness and anxiety. In severe cases of this pathology, the pulse could be Hurried.

HURRIED PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Deficiency of Yin with Empty Heat
- Severe rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel

c) Combinations

- **Hurried-Floating** indicates severe Empty Heat arising from Yin deficiency.
- **Hurried-Deep** indicates a condition of Rebellious-Qi in the Penetrating Vessel.
- **Hurried-Floating-Empty** denotes severe Yin deficiency.
- **Hurried-Slippery** indicates Empty Heat from Yin deficiency with Phlegm.
- **Hurried-Overflowing** indicates severe Empty Heat arising from Yin deficiency.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Hasty:** the Hasty pulse is Rapid and stops at irregular intervals. The Hurried pulse is more rapid than the Rapid pulse, and it gives the impression of being agitated and urgent.
- **Rapid:** the Hurried pulse is a form of the Rapid pulse. It differs from it insofar as it is more rapid, and it conveys the impression of being extremely agitated, urgent and hurried.

e) Clinical significance in each position

This is not applicable because an abnormality in the speed or rate of the pulse will be the same in all positions.

28. INTERMITTENT

a) Pulse description

The Intermittent pulse stops at regular intervals; it may be slow, rapid or of normal rate. After stopping, it gives the impression of taking a long time to start again. In order to establish whether a pulse is Intermittent or not, it is important to count the beats for a long time because it may stop only once in every 50 beats.

b) Clinical significance

The Intermittent pulse always indicates a Heart disharmony, but also the severe depletion of other Yin organs. The 'Simple Questions', in [Chapter 17](#), says: '*The Intermittent pulse indicates depletion of Qi.*'¹⁰ The Intermittent pulse is seen most frequently in severe deficiency of Heart-Qi and Spleen-Qi. The shorter the interval at which it stops, the more Yin organs are diseased.

According to [Chapter 5](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis', if the pulse halts every 50 beats, one Yin organ is diseased; if it halts every 40 beats, two Yin organs are diseased; if it halts every 30 beats, three Yin organs are diseased; if it halts every 20 beats, four Yin organs are diseased; and if it halts every 10 beats, all the Yin organs are diseased.¹¹ If the pulse stops regularly after less than 4 beats, it indicates a serious condition.

The Intermittent pulse may also indicate shock. Strangely, old Chinese books say that an Intermittent pulse around a hundred days of pregnancy is normal.

Common conditions that present with an Intermittent pulse include heart disease, Chest Painful Obstruction syndrome and some menstrual disorders.

INTERMITTENT PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Heart disharmony
- Shock
- Problem in Yin organs

c) Combinations

- **Intermittent-Slow** indicates exhaustion of the Original Qi.
- **Intermittent-Rapid** indicates internal Heat occurring against a background of a Heart disharmony.
- **Intermittent-Overflowing** indicates the location of the disease in the connecting channels.
- **Intermittent-Fine-Deep** denotes severe Spleen-Qi deficiency, possibly with chronic diarrhoea.
- **Intermittent-Fine-Minute** indicates exhaustion of Body Fluids.
- **Intermittent-Knotted** indicates heart disease occurring against a background of Heart-Yang deficiency.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Knotted:** the Knotted pulse is slow and stops at irregular intervals, whereas the Intermittent pulse may be slow, rapid or of normal rate and stops at regular intervals.
- **Hasty:** the Hasty pulse is rapid and stops at irregular intervals, whereas the Intermittent pulse may be slow, rapid or of normal rate and stops at regular intervals.

e) Clinical significance in each position

This is not applicable because an abnormality in the speed or rate of the pulse will be the same in all positions.

29. SLOWED-DOWN

a) Pulse description

The Slowed-Down pulse has four beats per breath cycle; it is therefore neither rapid nor slow.

b) Clinical significance

If the patient has no symptoms and the pulse is neither Floating nor Deep and neither Full nor Empty, the Slowed-Down pulse indicates health. In fact, the Slowed-Down quality indicates the presence of Stomach-Qi, which is one of the three attributes of the normal pulse, as described above.

In pathological conditions, when combined with other pulse qualities, it usually indicates Dampness occurring against a background of Stomach and Spleen deficiency.

Common conditions that present with a Slowed-Down pulse include stroke with Phlegm, Wind Painful Obstruction syndrome, vomiting and hiatus hernia.

SLOWED-DOWN PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Dampness with Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Health

c) Combinations

- **Slowed-Down-Soggy** indicates Dampness with Spleen-Qi deficiency.
- **Slowed-Down-Slippery** indicates Cold-Dampness.
- **Slowed-Down-Fine** indicates deficiency of Qi and Blood.
- **Slowed-Down-Floating** indicates weakness of the Defensive Qi.
- **Slowed-Down-Deep** indicates weakness of the Nutritive Qi.
- **Slowed-Down-Choppy** indicates Blood deficiency.
- **Slowed-Down-Big without strength** indicates Yin deficiency.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Slow:** the Slow pulse beats three times or less per breath cycle, whereas the Slowed-Down pulse beats four times per breath cycle.

e) Clinical significance in each position

This is not applicable because an abnormality in the speed or rate of the pulse will be the same in all positions.

THREE NONTRADITIONAL PULSE QUALITIES

30. IRREGULAR

a) Pulse description

The Irregular pulse stops at irregular intervals, but it is neither Slow nor Rapid. The traditional pulse qualities of Knotted and Hasty also describe an irregular pulse, but only when it is Slow or Rapid, respectively. In order to decide whether the pulse is Irregular, it is necessary to feel it for a long time because the pulse may stop only after many beats. Furthermore, it would be advisable not to diagnose an Irregular pulse during the first consultation because the pulse may become Irregular only for a definite time; this happens when the patient has had a shock or has suffered emotional stress.

b) Clinical significance

An Irregular pulse always indicates a Heart disharmony, which may be a deficiency, such as Heart-Qi or Heart-Blood deficiency, or an Excess, such as Heart-Blood stasis. As mentioned above, a pulse may be Irregular only for a certain time when the patient has suffered a shock or a deep emotional upset. Conversely, a person with an Irregular pulse is easily frightened and is prone to suffer from shock.

IRREGULAR PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Heart-Qi deficiency
- Heart-Blood deficiency
- Heart-Blood stasis
- Shock

A person with an Irregular pulse should not work too long hours, should not lift heavy things and should abstain from excessive sexual activity (especially if male).



A person with an Irregular pulse should not work too long hours, should not do heavy lifting and should abstain from excessive sexual activity.

c) Combinations

- **Irregular-Floating** indicates severe Heart-Qi deficiency from overwork.

- **Irregular-Deep** denotes Heart-Blood stasis.
- **Irregular-Full** denotes also Heart-Blood stasis.
- **Irregular-Empty** indicates severe Heart-Qi deficiency.
- **Irregular-Choppy** indicates severe Heart-Blood deficiency.
- **Irregular-Slippy** indicates Heart-Qi deficiency with Phlegm.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Intermittent:** the Intermittent pulse stops at regular intervals, whereas the Irregular pulse stops at irregular intervals.
- **Knotted:** the Knotted pulse is a form of Irregular pulse insofar as it stops at irregular intervals, but it is Slow. Unlike the Knotted pulse, the Irregular pulse has a normal rate.
- **Hasty:** the Hasty pulse is a form of Irregular pulse insofar as it stops at irregular intervals, but it is Rapid. Unlike the Hasty pulse, the Irregular pulse has a normal rate.

e) Clinical significance in each position

This is not applicable because an abnormality in the speed or rate of the pulse will be the same in all positions.

31. STAGNANT

a) Pulse description

The Stagnant pulse feels reluctant to come, as if being suppressed, and seems unlikely to last; it does not flow smoothly and does not have a 'wave'.

c) Combinations

The Stagnant pulse nearly always indicates deep emotional problems, pent-up feelings, resentment and depression. It also appears when the patient is on certain drugs, especially tranquilizers.

STAGNANT PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Deep emotional problems
- Pent-up feelings
- Resentment
- Tranquilizers

c) Combinations

- **Stagnant-Weak** indicates severe emotional problems occurring against a background of Qi and Blood deficiency.
- **Stagnant-Choppy** indicates severe emotional problems occurring against a background of Heart-Blood deficiency: the patient is usually very depressed.
- **Stagnant-Full** indicates pent-up emotions, bottled-up resentment and depression occurring against a background of Liver-Qi stagnation.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Choppy:** the Choppy pulse lacks a 'wave' and is weak and empty by definition. The Stagnant pulse also lacks a 'wave', but in addition it feels reluctant to come, as if being suppressed.
- **Sad:** the Sad pulse, like the Stagnant pulse, lacks a 'wave', but it is also Short, which the Stagnant pulse is not.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Front position: Heart- and/or Lung-Qi stagnation from sadness, grief or depression

Middle position: Liver-Qi stagnation from pent-up anger or resentment, tranquilizers

Rear position: Qi stagnation in the Intestines

32. SAD

a) Pulse description

The Sad pulse does not flow smoothly and lacks a wave; it is also Short and rather weak. It is found either in all positions or, if in individual positions, only in the Front or Middle positions; in other words, the pulse can never have a Sad quality only on the Rear position (see Fig. 50.1).

b) Clinical significance

The Sad pulse always indicates emotional problems, especially from sadness and grief; it is a pulse that is frequently seen in bereaved patients. One can gauge roughly the duration of the emotional problem according to how many positions are affected. If the pulse is Sad

only on the Front position, the problem is recent (about 6 months); if it is Sad on the Front and Middle positions, the problem is of about a year's duration; if it is Sad all over, it indicates the patient has been sad for a very long time, possibly his or her whole life.

If the person suffering from the above emotional problems has a good constitution, the pulse will display only the Sad quality and no others; if the person has a weak constitution, his or her emotional problems will eventually affect one or more organs, and this will be reflected in the relevant pulse positions (e.g., Weak Lung pulse, Weak Stomach pulse, Wiry Liver pulse, etc.).

SAD PULSE: SUMMARY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Emotional problems from sadness or grief

c) Combinations

- **Sad-Full** indicates emotional problems from grief affecting the Lungs.
- **Sad-Empty** indicates emotional problems from sadness affecting particularly the Heart.
- **Sad-Rapid** indicates emotional problems from grief and worry.
- **Sad-Slow** indicates emotional problems from deep sadness affecting the Heart.
- **Sad-Choppy** denotes Heart-Blood deficiency deriving from sadness.
- **Sad-Fine** denotes Heart-Blood deficiency deriving from sadness.

d) Differentiation of similar pulses

- **Choppy**: the Choppy pulse, like the Sad pulse, lacks a 'wave', but it is also weak and empty by definition. The Sad pulse is not necessarily weak or empty, and it is also Short.

e) Clinical significance in each position

Front position: Heart- and/or Lung-Qi deficiency from recent sadness (about 2 years)

Middle position: Liver- and Heart-Blood deficiency from long-term sadness. The pulse cannot have the Sad quality in the Middle position only; therefore in this case it will have this quality in the Middle and Front positions.

Rear position: a pulse does not usually have a Sad quality in the Rear position.

CLASSIFICATION OF PULSE QUALITIES

Pulse qualities can be classified in various ways, each of which helps to shed more light on their nature.

1. THE EIGHT BASIC GROUPS OF PULSE QUALITIES

a) Floating pulses

Floating – Hollow – Leather – Soggy – Overflowing

b) Deep pulses

Deep – Hidden – Firm

c) Slow pulses

Slow – Knotted

d) Rapid pulses

Rapid – Hasty – Hurried – Overflowing – Moving

e) Slippery pulses

Slippery – Soggy – Moving

f) Choppy pulses

Choppy – Scattered

g) Empty pulses

Empty – Weak – Soggy – Fine – Minute – Scattered – Short – Choppy

h) Full pulses

Full – Wiry – Tight – Big – Overflowing – Long

Of course, the same pulse quality may appear in more than one category according to different aspects (e.g., Overflowing appears in the Floating and the Full categories).

2. THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS FOR THE CLASSIFICATION OF PULSE QUALITIES

It may help us to understand the nature of pulse qualities if we realize that they reflect different aspects of the pulse. For example, Slow and Rapid clearly refer to an irregularity of the rate of the pulse, whereas Knotted, Hasty and Intermittent refer to an irregularity of the rhythm.

a) According to depth

Floating – Deep – Hidden – Firm – Leather

b) According to rate

Slow – Rapid – Slowed-Down – Hurried – Moving

c) According to strength

Empty – Full – Weak – Scattered

d) According to size

Big – Overflowing – Fine – Minute

e) According to length

Long – Short – Moving

f) According to shape

Slippery – Choppy – Wiry – Tight – Moving – Hollow – Firm

g) According to rhythm

Knotted – Hasty – Intermittent

Of course, some pulse qualities escape such classification because they are defined according to more than one aspect. The following pulse qualities are good examples.

- The Soggy pulse is defined according to depth (it is floating), size (it is thin) and strength (it is soft).
- The Leather pulse is defined according to strength (it is empty at the deep level) and depth (it is relatively superficial).

- The Firm pulse is defined according to depth (it is deep), strength (it is full) and shape (it is wiry).
- The Scattered pulse is defined according to strength (it is weak), depth (it is relatively floating) and shape (it is 'broken up').

3. CLASSIFICATION OF PULSE QUALITIES ACCORDING TO QI, BLOOD AND BODY FLUIDS PATTERNS

Having discussed the pulse qualities and their clinical significance one by one, it may be helpful to summarize them by grouping them according to the main patterns.

a) Qi deficiency

Empty – Short – Scattered

b) Yang deficiency

Deep – Weak – Hidden

c) Blood deficiency

Choppy – Fine – Scattered

d) Yin deficiency

Fine – Minute – Leather

e) Qi stagnation

Wiry

f) Blood stasis

Wiry – Choppy – Firm

g) Phlegm

Slippery – Wiry

h) Dampness

Soggy – Slippery

4. CLASSIFICATION OF PULSE QUALITIES ACCORDING TO THE EIGHT PRINCIPLES

a) Yin-Yang

- i) *Yang deficiency*: Weak, Slow, Deep
- ii) *Yin deficiency*: Fine, Minute, Floating-Empty, Leather
- iii) *Collapse of Yang*: Hidden, Slow, Scattered
- iv) *Collapse of Yin*: Minute, Rapid

b) Exterior-Interior

- i) *Exterior*: Floating
 - Cold: Floating-Tight
 - Heat: Floating-Rapid
 - Deficient: Floating-Slow-Weak
 - Excess: Floating-Full-Tight
- ii) *Interior*: Deep
 - Cold: Deep-Slow
 - Heat: Deep-Rapid
 - Deficient: Deep-Weak
 - Excess: Deep-Full

c) Heat-Cold

- i) *Heat*: Rapid, Hasty, Hurried, Big, Overflowing
- ii) *Cold*: Slow, Knotted, Tight

d) Deficiency-Excess

- i) *Deficiency*: Empty, Weak, Choppy, Fine, Minute, Soggy, Short, Hollow, Leather, Hidden, Scattered.
 - Deficiency of Qi: Empty, Soggy
 - Deficiency of Yang: Weak, Hidden
 - Deficiency of Blood: Choppy, Fine
 - Deficiency of Yin: Fine, Minute, Leather, Floating-Empty
- ii) *Excess*: Full, Slippery, Wiry, Tight, Overflowing, Big, Firm, Long.
 - Stagnation of Qi: Wiry
 - Blood stasis: Wiry, Choppy, Firm, Slippery

5. CLASSIFICATION OF PULSE QUALITIES ACCORDING TO THE SIX STAGES PATTERNS

Refer to [Table 50.2](#).

Table 50.2 Pulses of the 6 Stages patterns

GREATER YANG	Channel	Prevalence of Cold	Floating-Tight
	Organ	Prevalence of Wind	Floating-Slow
		Accumulation of Water	Floating-Rapid
		Accumulation of Blood	Deep-Fine-Rapid
BRIGHT YANG	Channel	Overflowing-Rapid	
	Organ	Deep-Full-Slippery-Rapid	
LESSER YANG	Wiry		
GREATER YIN	Deep-Weak-Slow		
LESSER YIN	Cold transformation	Deep-Weak-Slow	
	Heat transformation	Fine-Rapid	
TERMINAL YIN	Wiry		

6. CLASSIFICATION OF PULSE QUALITIES ACCORDING TO THE FOUR LEVELS PATTERNS

Refer to [Table 50.3](#).

7. CLASSIFICATION OF PULSE QUALITIES ACCORDING TO THE TRIPLE BURNER PATTERNS

Refer to [Table 50.4](#).

TERMINOLOGY

In order to facilitate cross-reference with other authors, [Table 50.5](#) indicates the terminology of pulse qualities used by six authors. The authors and their books are:

1. Garry Seifert: 'Li Shi Zhen Pulse Diagnosis', published by Garry Seifert, Haymarket, NSW, Australia.
2. Ted Kaptchuk: 'The Web that has no Weaver', Congdon and Weed, NY, 1983.
3. Yang Shou Zhong (translator), 'The Pulse Classic' (*Mai Jing*), Blue Poppy Press, Boulder, CO, USA, 1997.
4. Cheng Xin Nong: 'Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion', Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1987.

Table 50.3 Pulses of the four Levels patterns

DEFENSIVE QI	Wind-Heat	Floating-Rapid
	Damp-Heat	Soggy-Slow
	Dry-Heat	Floating-Rapid
	Summer-Heat	Soggy-Rapid
QI	Lung-Heat	Slippery-Rapid
	Stomach-Heat	Overflowing-Rapid
	Intestines Dry-Heat	Deep-Full-Rapid
	Gall-Bladder-Heat	Wiry-Rapid
	Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen	Soggy-Rapid
NUTRITIVE QI	Heat in Nutritive-Qi Level	Fine-Rapid
	Heat in Pericardium	Fine-Rapid
BLOOD	Heat Victorious moving Blood	Wiry-Rapid
	Heat Victorious stirring Wind	Wiry-Rapid
	Empty Wind agitating in the Interior	Fine-Rapid
	Collapse of Yin	Minute-Rapid
	Collapse of Yang	Hidden-Slow-Scattered

Table 50.4 Pulses of the Triple Burner patterns

UPPER BURNER	Wind-Heat in the Lung	Floating-Rapid
	Defensive-Qi portion	
	Heat in the Lungs (Qi level)	Rapid-Overflowing
MIDDLE BURNER	Heat in the Pericardium (Nutritive-Qi level)	Fine-Rapid
	Heat in Bright Yang	Overflowing-Rapid
	Damp-Heat in the Spleen	Soggy-Rapid
LOWER BURNER	Heat in the Kidneys	Floating-Empty and Rapid
	Liver-Heat stirs Wind	Wiry-Fine-Rapid
	Liver-Empty Wind	Deep-Fine-Rapid

5. N. Wiseman and A. Ellis (translators): 'Fundamentals of Chinese Medicine', Paradigm Publications, Brookline, MA, USA, 1985.
6. B. Flaws (translator): 'The Lakeside Master's Study of the Pulse' by Li Shi Zhen, Blue Poppy Press, Boulder, CO, USA, 1998.

The pulse positions in detail

I shall now discuss the various pulse qualities appearing at each pulse position and their clinical significance. This

information is derived primarily from Dr J. H. F. Shen and secondarily from my own experience. As indicated above, Dr Shen places the Large Intestine on the left and the Small Intestine on the right-Rear position; most other authors reverse this.

1. LEFT-FRONT POSITION (HEART)

The structure of the left-Front position is shown in [Figure 50.2](#).

The left-Front position corresponds to the Heart and Pericardium or to the Heart and Small Intestine in the Five-Element arrangement of the pulses.

Emotional stress frequently causes abnormal qualities at this position, and I shall discuss the most frequent qualities one by one. This discussion assumes that a particular pulse position has a quality that is different from the rest of the pulse. For example, the discussion of the Overflowing quality on the left-Front position applies if such quality is found only at this position; if all the pulse positions were Overflowing, the interpretation would, of course, be different.

a) Overflowing

I very frequently encounter an Overflowing quality at this position when the person is affected by deep emotional problems causing anxiety and worry; more often than not, these problems are due to relationship difficulties. It is important to stress that the pulse quality may be 'Overflowing' at this position only in relation to the rest of the pulse, and when it is so, it 'stands out' and attracts our attention. Therefore, if all the other pulse positions are quite weak and the pulse on the Heart position is much stronger and more superficial, we may classify this as being 'Overflowing', although the same quality in a person with strong pulses would be normal.

It is essential that a relatively Overflowing quality on this position when the rest of the positions are very weak is not interpreted as being normal; when that particular position stands out and is out of tune with the rest of the pulse, it usually indicates where the main problem lies.

The Overflowing quality on the Heart position also indicates that, as a consequence of deep emotional stress, Qi rebels upwards towards the chest and face, and the patient would experience a feeling of heat in the face, a sense of constriction of the throat, and a feeling of energy rising to the head.

Table 50.5 Pulse terminology of different authors

Maciocia	Seifert	Kaptchuk	Yang	Cheng	Flaws	Wiseman
Floating	Floating	Floating	Floating	Superficial	Floating	Floating
Deep	Deep	Sinking	Deep	Deep	Sunken	Deep
Slow	Slow	Slow	Slow	Slow	Slow	Slow
Rapid	Rapid	Rapid	Rapid	Rapid	Rapid	Rapid
Empty	Empty	Empty	Vacuous	Deficiency type	Vacuous	Vacuous
Full	Full	Full	Replete	Excess type	Replete	Replete
Slippery	Slippery	Slippery	Slippery	Rolling	Slippery	Slippery
Choppy	Choppy	Choppy	Choppy	Hesitant	Choppy	Rough
Weak	Weak	Frail	Weak	Weak	Weak	
Fine	Thin	Thin	Fine	Thready	Fine	Thin
Minute	Minute	Minute	Faint		Faint	
Soggy	Soft	Soggy	Soft	Soft	Soggy	Soggy
Short	Short	Short			Short	Short
Hollow	Hollow	Hollow	Scallion-stalk		Scallion-stork	
Leather	Leather	Leather	Drumskin		Drumskin	
Hidden	Hidden	Hidden	Hidden		Deep-lying	
Scattered	Scattered	Scattered	Dissipated		Scattered	
Wiry	Stringy	Wiry	Bowstring	String-taut	Bowstring	Wiry
Tight	Tight	Tight	Tight	Tense	Tight	
Overflowing	Flooding	Flooding	Surging	Surging	Surging	Surging
Big		Big				
Firm	Firm	Confined			Confined	
Long	Long	Long			Long	Long
Moving	Moving	Moving	Stirring		Stirring	
Knotted	Knotted	Knotted	Bound	Knotted	Bound	Slow-irregularly interrupted
Hasty	Hasty		Skipping	Abrupt	Skipping	Rapid-irregularly interrupted
Hurried		Hurried				
Intermittent	Intermittent	Intermittent	Interrupted	Regularly intermittent	Regularly interrupted	Regularly interrupted
Slowed-down	Retarded	Moderate	Moderate		Moderate	

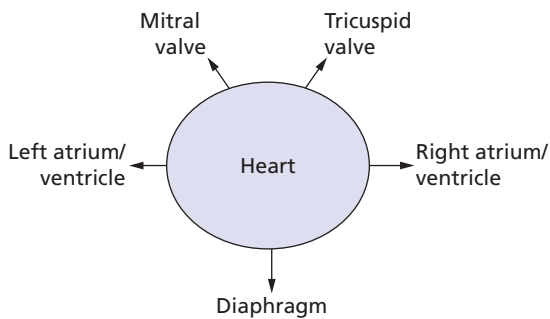


Figure 50.2. Structure of left-Front pulse position.

b) Short

A Short quality on the Heart position also indicates emotional problems, usually deriving from sadness and grief. The Short pulse lacks a 'wave'; that is, it does not flow smoothly with a wave-like movement towards the wrist. Dr Shen calls this the 'Sad pulse' because it is nearly always due to this emotion. I frequently see this pulse in people who are sad from being lonely and who crave love and affection; this pulse is also seen in people who tend to hide their emotions.

If both Heart and Lung positions feel Short, this can be due to two causes: either it is due to sadness, as above, or to an accident to the chest. To differentiate these two conditions, one must refer to the other aspects of diagnosis. For example, in a case of sadness, the eyes might lack spirit (*shen*), the tongue might be Red on the tip or have a Heart crack, and the complexion might be pale.

c) Weak

A Weak position on the Heart pulse often indicates a functional weakness of the heart and circulation rather than emotional problems, although the two conditions may, of course, occur simultaneously. Thus, a Weak pulse on the left-Front position often indicates Heart-Qi, Heart-Yang or Heart-Blood deficiency, and the patient would suffer from cold hands, tiredness, slight breathlessness, slight depression and palpitations. If the Heart position is very Weak, but the other pulses are not Weak and there is a Heart crack on the tongue, these signs indicate a constitutional weakness of the Heart.

d) Floating

A pulse that is Floating in one position only is not so floating as the Floating pulse seen in external invasions of Wind. When the pulse is Floating only in one position (that is not the Lung position), it does not indicate an exterior invasion of Wind, but rather a pathology of that particular organ. In mild invasions of external Wind, the pulse may be Floating only on the Lung position.

A Floating quality on the Heart pulse often indicates a problem with the heart itself. For example, a Floating-Hollow quality felt on the lateral and medial side of the pulse position may indicate high blood pressure. A Floating-Weak-Hollow quality indicates that the heart is dilated; this occurs often in people who jog for long distances every day. A Floating-Tight-Hollow quality may indicate hardening of the arteries.

e) Slippery

A Slippery quality on the Heart position, especially on its medial and lateral sides, often indicates heart disease; in such a case, the pulse on the heart position is often Deep, Fine and Slippery.

f) Hollow

If the whole pulse is Hollow, it of course indicates loss of Blood, but the significance is different if only the Heart position is Hollow. In such a case, it usually denotes that the heart is permanently dilated or enlarged, often from excessive jogging. If the pulse feels Hollow and Overflowing with strength on the distal or proximal side of the Heart position, it may indicate arteriosclerosis and/or high blood pressure.

g) Choppy

A Choppy quality on the Heart position indicates Heart-Blood deficiency, often deriving from emotional problems, such as sadness. If both the Heart and Liver positions are Choppy, it indicates general deficiency of Blood, which may derive from other than emotional causes (such as overwork or childbirth).

h) Wiry

A Wiry quality on the Heart position usually indicates stagnation in the chest. If the pulse is Wiry and strong,

it indicates stagnation of Qi in the chest, with the patient most probably suffering from chest pain. If it is Wiry but Fine and rapid, it may indicate that the heart has been affected by shock. If both the Heart and Lung positions are Wiry with strength, it may indicate stagnation of Qi in the chest, probably due to a previous accident or blow to the chest.

LEFT-FRONT POSITION (HEART)

- Overflowing: Deep emotional problems, Qi rebelling upwards
- Short: sadness or grief
- Weak: functional weakness of the heart and circulation, Heart-Qi, Heart-Yang, or Heart-Blood deficiency
- Floating: possibly a heart problem, high blood pressure (Floating-Hollow on lateral medial side), heart dilated (Floating-Weak-Hollow), hardening of the arteries (Floating-Tight-Hollow)
- Slippery: heart disease (Slippery on medial and lateral sides)
- Hollow: heart dilated, usually from excessive jogging, hardening of arteries, stroke, high blood pressure (Hollow-Overflowing)
- Choppy: Heart-Blood deficiency, usually from sadness
- Wiry: stagnation of Qi in the chest, shock (Wiry-Fine-Rapid), accident to the chest (both Heart and Lung positions Wiry)

2. LEFT-MIDDLE POSITION (LIVER)

The structure of the left-Middle position is illustrated in [Figure 50.3](#).

The left-Middle position corresponds to the Liver and Gall-Bladder; there is little disagreement on this by various authors.

a) Floating

A Floating quality on this position is quite common and usually indicates Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Qi rebelling

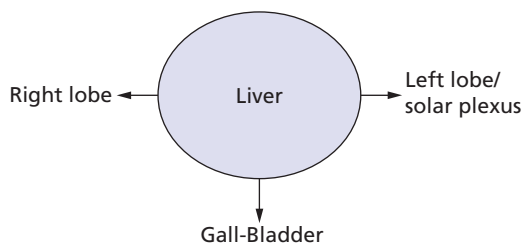


Figure 50.3. Structure of left-Middle pulse position.

horizontally. Of course, this assumes that the pulse is Floating only in this position and not Floating in general and that there are no symptoms or signs of an exterior invasion of Wind.

If the pulse feels Floating and Wiry on the Liver position, it indicates Liver-Yang rising; if it is Floating but Weak and slightly Hollow, it indicates stagnation of Liver-Qi in the epigastrium and hypochondrium.

b) Deep

If the pulse on the Liver position is Deep and Slippery, it indicates Phlegm affecting the Liver and Gall-Bladder. If it is Deep, Wiry and Slippery, it indicates Gall-Bladder disease. If it is Deep and Weak, it indicates Liver-Blood deficiency.

c) Slippery

A Slippery quality on the Liver pulse indicates poor liver function due to affliction from Phlegm. If the pulse is Slippery on the proximal side of the pulse position, it indicates Dampness in the Gall-Bladder. If it is Slippery and Wiry on the proximal side, it may indicate the presence of gall-bladder stones (in this case there may also be small blood spots on the sclera of the eyes).

d) Overflowing

An Overflowing quality on the Liver position indicates Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire blazing.

e) Wiry

A Wiry quality on the Liver position is very common because this quality is indicative of Liver disharmonies. If it is Wiry but also 'stagnant' (i.e., without a wave but strong), it indicates repressed anger.

If both left and right Middle positions are Wiry, it indicates rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach.

3. LEFT-REAR POSITION (KIDNEY)

The structure of the left-Front position is illustrated in [Figure 50.4](#).

The left-Rear position reflects the state of the Kidneys, Large Intestine, Bladder and Uterus.

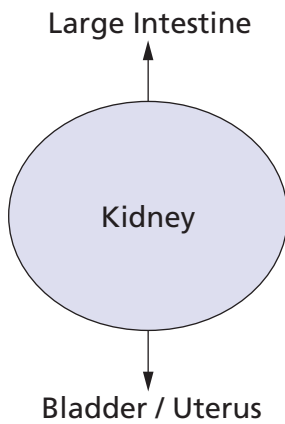


Figure 50.4. Structure of left-Rear pulse position.

LEFT-MIDDLE POSITION (LIVER)

- Floating: Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Qi rebelling horizontally (Floating-Weak and slightly Hollow)
- Deep: Phlegm in Liver and Gall-Bladder, gall-bladder disease (Deep-Wiry-Slippery), Liver-Blood deficiency (Deep-Weak)
- Slippery: Liver affected by Phlegm, Dampness in the Gall-Bladder (Slippery on the proximal side), gall-bladder stones (Slippery-Wiry on the proximal side)
- Overflowing: Liver-Yang rising or Liver-Fire blazing
- Wiry: Liver disharmony, repressed anger (Wiry-Stagnant), Liver-Qi invading the Stomach (both Middle positions Wiry)

a) Floating

A Floating quality with strength usually relates to Large Intestine problems, whereas a Floating quality without strength usually reflects Kidney problems.

A Floating, Fine, Wiry and Rapid quality on the left-Rear position indicates stagnation in the Large Intestines with Damp-Heat. A Floating, Weak quality indicates weak Kidneys. In a woman, a Floating-Wiry quality here indicates Blood Heat in the Uterus. A Floating-Rapid quality on the left Kidney position in a pregnant woman indicates the danger of miscarriage.

b) Deep

A Deep quality here usually indicates Kidney deficiency, especially Kidney-Yang deficiency; it is an extremely common quality at the Kidney position, especially after age 40, and is more often seen in women. Two factors should be taken into account when judging whether this position is Deep or not: first, it is normal for this

position to be deeper than the Front and Middle ones, and, second, it is normal for this position to be somewhat deeper in winter.

A Deep, Fine and Weak quality on the left Kidney position indicates a severe deficiency of the Kidneys; if, in addition, it is Slow, it indicates a severe deficiency of Kidney-Yang.

If the pulse is Deep, Full and Slippery on the distal side, it indicates Dampness in the Large Intestine. If it is Deep, Weak and Slippery in the same position, it indicates weak Large-Intestine Qi and diarrhoea.

c) Slippery

A Slippery quality on the Kidney position usually indicates retention of Dampness in the Kidneys and Bladder. According to Dr Shen, a Slippery pulse in this position in men may indicate the tendency to have frequent nocturnal emissions.

If the pulse is Slippery, Deep and Full on the distal side (Large Intestine), it indicates Dampness in the Large Intestine and possibly diarrhoea; if it is Slippery, Deep and Weak, it indicates weak Large-Intestine Qi and possibly diarrhoea.

If the pulse is Slippery on the proximal side (Uterus), it indicates pregnancy if the Heart pulse is strong and amenorrhoea if the Heart pulse is weak.

d) Weak

A Weak quality on the left Kidney position is extremely common both in men and women, especially after age 40, and it indicates a Kidney deficiency. In men, it may be due to excessive sexual activity, whereas in women it may be due to having had too many children too close together, to menorrhagia, or to hysterectomy; in both men and women, it is often due to overwork.

If the left Kidney pulse is Weak and Intermittent, it indicates a deficiency of the Kidneys and the Original Qi, and it may be due to excessive sexual activity (or indeed any level of sexual activity) before puberty.

e) Fine

A Fine pulse on the Kidney position indicates deficiency of the Original Qi and Essence; in men, this may be due to excessive sexual activity (including masturbation). If this pulse is Fine, Hidden and Wiry, it indicates inflammation in the Large Intestine.

f) Overflowing

An Overflowing quality here is usually related to the Intestines rather than the Kidneys; it indicates Heat in the Large Intestine. If it is Overflowing on both left and right Kidney positions, it may indicate prostatic hypertrophy.

g) Hollow

A Hollow quality on the Kidney position is usually seen in diabetes when the patient has been on insulin for many years.

LEFT-REAR POSITION (LARGE INTESTINE AND KIDNEY)

- Floating: Large Intestine pattern (with strength), Kidney pattern (without strength), Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine (Floating-Fine-Wiry-Rapid), Blood Heat affecting Uterus (Floating-Wiry), danger of miscarriage (Floating-Rapid)
- Deep: Kidney-Yang deficiency, severe Kidney deficiency (Deep-Fine-Weak), severe Kidney-Yang deficiency (Deep-Fine-Weak-Slow), Dampness in the Large Intestine (Deep-Full-Slippy on distal side), weak Large Intestine Qi (Deep-Weak-Slippy on distal side)
- Slippery: Dampness in Kidneys and Bladder, Dampness in Large Intestine (Slippy-Deep-Full on distal side), Weak Large Intestine Qi (Slippy-Deep-Weak), amenorrhoea (Slippy on proximal side and Weak Heart pulse), pregnancy (Slippy on proximal side and strong Heart pulse)
- Weak: Kidney deficiency, deficiency of the Original Qi (Weak and Intermittent)
- Fine: deficiency of the Original Qi and Essence, inflammation of the Large Intestine (Fine-Hidden-Wiry)
- Overflowing: Heat in the Large Intestine, prostatic hypertrophy (Overflowing on both left- and right-Rear positions)
- Hollow: diabetes

4. RIGHT-FRONT POSITION (LUNG)

The structure of the right-Front position is illustrated in [Figure 50.5](#).

The right-Front position reflects the state of the Lungs. It should be remembered that the Lung pulse is naturally quite soft, and this should be taken into account when identifying a particular pathological quality, especially the Full-type ones. In other words, a Tight or Wiry or Slippery quality on the Lung pulse is less obvious than in other positions. Thus, a quality that might be considered

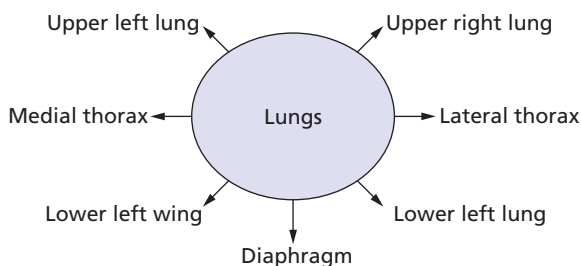


Figure 50.5. Structure of right-Front pulse position.

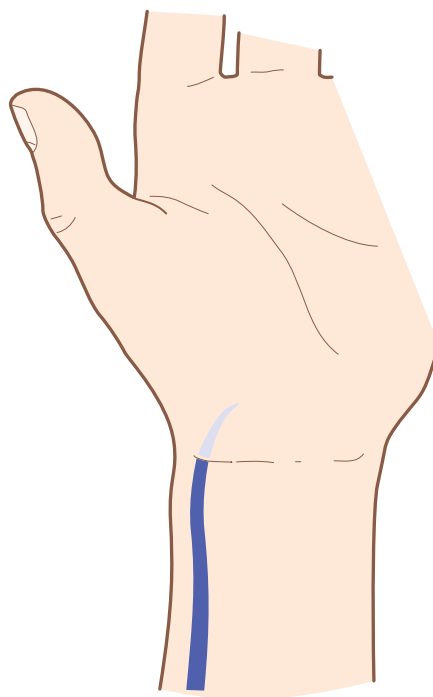


Figure 50.6. 'Special' Lung pulse (distal and medial location).

'Slippery' or 'Tight' on the Lung pulse may be normal for other pulse positions.

When feeling the Lung pulse, we should also check a position distal and medial to it, which Dr Shen calls the 'special' Lung pulse ([Figure 50.6](#)). In normal conditions, there is no pulse in this position. If the 'special' Lung pulse is present while the Lung pulse itself is Weak, it indicates that the patient had a lung disease as a child or that his or her parents had a lung disease, possibly TB of the lungs, and that these factors have adversely affected the patient's lungs. If a 'special' Lung pulse can be felt but the Lung pulse itself is normal, it indicates either that the patient suffered a lung disease during childhood (whooping cough, pneumonia) or that his or her parents suffered from a lung disease (e.g., TB of the

lungs). If the 'special' Lung pulse is soft and the Lung pulse itself is normal, it indicates a past problem in the lung. If the 'special' Lung pulse is Floating, it indicates a present problem in the lungs, such as asthma or TB. If the 'special' Lung pulse is Slippery and the Lung pulse itself is normal, it indicates retention of old phlegm in the lungs. If the 'special' Lung pulse is Slippery and Weak and the Lung pulse itself also is Weak, it may indicate TB of the lungs.

a) Floating

A Floating quality on the Lung position is very commonly seen in invasions of external Wind; if the pathogenic factor is particularly strong, the pulse will be Floating in all positions. A Floating-Tight quality on this positions indicates invasion of Wind-Cold with prevalence of Cold; a Floating-Slow quality indicates invasion of Wind-Cold with prevalence of Wind; and a Floating-Rapid quality indicates invasion of Wind-Heat.

If the pulse in this position is Floating but Weak, it indicates a previous invasion of Wind with retention of a residual pathogenic factor in the Interior. If it is Floating, Hollow and soft, it indicates stagnation of Qi in the Lungs from emotional problems.

b) Slippery

A Slippery quality on the Lung position indicates retention of Phlegm in the Lungs.

c) Overflowing

An Overflowing quality on the Lung position indicates Lung-Heat. In the absence of Heat signs, a relatively Overflowing quality in this position indicates emotional problems deriving from grief or worry.

d) Hollow

A Hollow quality with strength indicates that there might be bleeding in the lungs; if it is also Rapid, it indicates a forthcoming bleeding in the lungs.

5. RIGHT-MIDDLE POSITION (STOMACH AND SPLEEN)

The structure of the right-Middle position is illustrated in Figure 50.7.

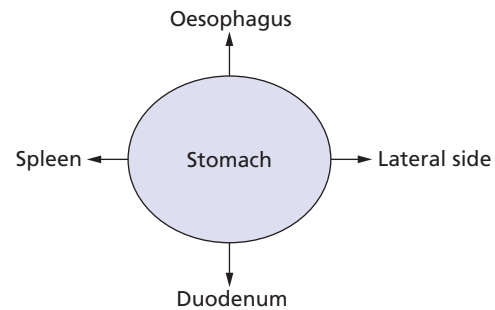


Figure 50.7. Structure of right-Middle pulse position.

RIGHT-FRONT POSITION (LUNG)

- Floating: invasion of external Wind, invasion of Wind-Cold (Floating-Tight), invasion of Wind-Heat (Floating-Rapid), residual pathogenic factor (Floating-Weak), stagnation of Qi in the Lungs from emotional problems (Floating-Hollow and soft)
- Slippery: Phlegm in the Lungs
- Overflowing: Lung-Heat, emotional problems from grief or worry
- Hollow: bleeding in the Lungs

As explained in the introduction to pulse diagnosis, the terms 'external' and 'internal' describing the different location of Yang and Yin organs on the pulse can be interpreted in three ways: they can mean superficial and deep, lateral and medial, or distal and proximal. In the case of the right-Middle position, the most widely used interpretations are the first two; that is, the Stomach is felt on the surface or lateral side, and the Spleen at the deep level or medial side. However, in the case of the Stomach and Spleen, more than any other Yin-Yang organs systems, the relationship between the two is extremely close, so the pulse position needs to be taken as a whole, indicating the state of the Earth Element. The differentiation between Stomach and Spleen should be seen not mechanically, but dynamically, according to clinical manifestations. As a rough rule of thumb, Full-type qualities on this position reflect a Stomach pathology, whereas Empty-type ones reflect a Spleen pathology.

a) Floating

A Floating quality on this position is very common and always reflects a Stomach pathology. It usually indicates Stomach-Heat or Qi stagnation in the Stomach.

When the Stomach pulse is Floating, the patient experiences a pronounced feeling of distension in the epigastrium. If the pulse is slightly Floating but empty at the deep level, it indicates Stomach-Yin deficiency; this quality is also frequently seen in practice.

b) Wiry

A Wiry quality on the right-Middle position indicates stagnation of Qi in the Stomach, usually from dietary irregularities, such as eating too much, eating in a hurry, eating under stress, etc. If both Middle positions are Wiry, it indicates that rebellious Liver-Qi is invading the Stomach.

c) Weak

A Weak quality on this position is extremely common and usually indicates a Spleen deficiency. If the pulse feels very Weak on the Stomach position but slightly Wiry on its proximal side (rolling the finger very slightly proximally), it may indicate a prolapse of the Stomach. A Stomach prolapse may cause considerable digestive problems even when it is minimal, and the pulse reflects this accurately – the patient experiences a poor digestion, feels sleepy after eating, suffers a feeling of heaviness of the epigastrium and is very tired in general.

If the pulse is Weak, relatively Floating and Hollow, it indicates Stomach-Yin deficiency with slight Qi stagnation. The patient experiences excessive stomach acidity and pronounced epigastric distension.

If the pulse is Weak and very slightly Wiry and the Lung pulse is Weak, it may indicate a stomach ulcer.

If both right and left Middle positions are Weak, Deep and Slow, it indicates a deficiency of Stomach and Spleen

d) Fine

A Fine quality on the right-Middle position is common; it indicates a deficiency of both Spleen and Stomach. If it is Fine, Deep and very slightly Wiry, it may indicate a stomach ulcer; if it is Fine, Deep, Slippery and Rapid, it indicates Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen.

e) Slippery

A Slippery quality on this position indicates Dampness or Phlegm. Dampness may affect both Spleen and Stomach, whereas Phlegm usually affects only the Stomach. If the

pulse is Slippery and Full, it usually indicates Phlegm in the Stomach; if it is Slippery but Weak and relatively soft, it indicates chronic Dampness in the Spleen.

f) Soggy

A Soggy quality on this position is common, and it indicates chronic Dampness in the Spleen. It is frequently seen in post-viral fatigue syndrome.

g) Hollow

A Hollow quality on the right-Middle position indicates bleeding in the stomach; if the pulse is Hollow and Rapid, it may indicate a forthcoming stomach haemorrhage.

RIGHT-MIDDLE POSITION (STOMACH AND SPLEEN)

- Floating: Stomach-Heat, Qi stagnation in the Stomach, Stomach-Yin deficiency (Floating but Empty at the Deep level)
- Wiry: Qi stagnation in the Stomach, rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach (both Middle positions Wiry), eating too fast, possibly hiatus hernia (Wiry on distal position)
- Weak: Spleen-Qi deficiency, prolapse of the Stomach (Weak on the main position and slightly Wiry on the proximal side), Stomach-Yin deficiency (Weak-Floating-Hollow), stomach ulcer (Weak and slightly Wiry), deficiency of Stomach and Spleen (Weak-Deep-Slow on both Middle positions)
- Fine: deficiency of Stomach and Spleen, stomach ulcer (Fine-Deep and very slightly Wiry), Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen (Fine-Deep-Slippery-Rapid)
- Slippery: Dampness or Phlegm in the Stomach (Slippery-Full) or Spleen (Slippery-Weak)
- Soggy: chronic Dampness in the Spleen with Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Hollow: bleeding in the stomach with forthcoming stomach haemorrhage (Hollow-Rapid)

6. RIGHT-REAR POSITION (SMALL INTESTINE AND KIDNEYS)

The structure of the right-Rear position is illustrated in [Figure 50.8](#). The right-Rear position reflects the Kidneys, Small Intestine and Lower Burner.

a) Floating

A Floating quality on the right-Rear position usually reflects a pathology of the Small Intestine (i.e., Heat in the Small Intestine).

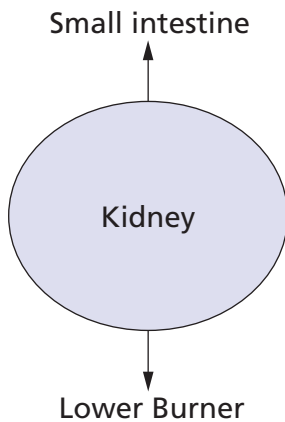


Figure 50.8. Structure of right-Rear pulse position.

RIGHT-REAR POSITION (SMALL INTESTINE AND KIDNEYS)

- Floating: Heat in the Small Intestine
- Weak: Kidney deficiency, Kidney-Yang deficiency (Weak and Deep)
- Slippery: Dampness in the Small-Intestine, Damp-Heat with Qi stagnation in the Small Intestine (Slippery-Wiry), ulcerative colitis (Slippery-Wiry on both rear positions; Dampness in the Small Intestine and Kidneys (Slippery-Deep-Weak)
- Wiry: stagnation of Qi in the Small Intestine, Damp-Heat with Qi stagnation in the Small Intestine (Wiry-Long-Rapid), Damp-Heat in the Small Intestine with Kidney deficiency (Wiry-Fine-Rapid)

b) Weak

A Weak quality on the right-Rear position usually reflects a pathology of the Kidneys. If the pulse is Deep and Weak, it usually indicates a deficiency of Kidney-Yang.

c) Slippery

A Slippery quality on the right-Rear position usually reflects a pathology of the Small Intestine (i.e., Dampness). If it is Slippery and Wiry, it indicates Damp-Heat in the Small Intestine with Qi stagnation; this pulse quality is frequently seen in ulcerative colitis. If the pulse is Slippery but Deep and slightly Weak, it indicates retention of Dampness in the Small Intestine and Kidneys.

d) Wiry

A Wiry quality on the right-Rear position usually reflects a pathology of the Small Intestine, and it indicates Qi stagnation. If the pulse in this position is Wiry, Long and Rapid, it indicates Damp-Heat and Qi stagnation in the Small Intestine; this pulse picture is frequently seen in ulcerative colitis. If the pulse is Wiry but Fine and Rapid, it indicates Damp-Heat in the Small Intestine occurring against a background of Kidney deficiency.

PULSE QUALITIES INDICATING DANGEROUS CONDITIONS

Traditionally, there are 10 pulse qualities that indicate dangerous conditions and a poor prognosis. The 10 dangerous qualities are:

- Boiling cauldron pulse
- Circling fish pulse
- Swimming shrimp pulse
- Leaking roof pulse
- Pecking bird pulse
- Untying rope pulse
- Bouncing stone pulse
- Upturned knife pulse
- Spinning bean pulse
- Sesame seed hasty pulse

a) Boiling cauldron pulse

This pulse is in the skin, floating and extremely rapid so that it cannot be counted. It feels like water boiling furiously in a cauldron; it is without root.

This pulse indicates extreme Heat in the three Yang and complete drying up of Yin.

b) Circling fish pulse

This pulse is in the skin; it is like a fish with the head still and the tail waving and shaking; it is sometimes there and sometimes not. It is also extremely rapid.

This pulse indicates extreme Cold in the three Yin and Collapse of Yang.

c) Swimming shrimp pulse

This pulse is in the skin, but its shape is somewhat hidden; sometimes it comes, sometimes it does not; it jumps and darts like a shrimp.

This pulse indicates Collapse of both Yin and Yang.

d) Leaking roof pulse

This pulse is in between the muscles and sinews; it is like water dripping, one drop at a time, at long, uneven intervals, each drop splashing without strength.

This pulse indicates Collapse of Qi of the Stomach and Spleen.

e) Pecking bird pulse

This pulse is in between the muscles and sinews; it is rapid and irregular, stopping and starting. It is like a bird pecking at food three then five times in a row, stopping and starting at irregular intervals.

This pulse indicates exhaustion of Spleen-Qi and of Food-Qi (*Gu Qi*).

f) Untying rope pulse

This pulse is in between the muscles and sinews; it is rapid and beats chaotically at irregular intervals.

This pulse indicates Collapse of Kidney-Qi.

g) Bouncing stone pulse

This pulse is in between the muscles and sinews and is like a finger tapping hard on a stone at irregular intervals.

This pulse denotes exhaustion of Kidney-Water.

h) Uprturned knife pulse

This pulse is like the blade of a knife upside down; it is thin but hard and tense. On the superficial level it is thin, hard and tense, and at the deep level it is large, hard and tense.

This pulse indicates exhaustion of Liver- and Kidney-Yin.

i) Spinning bean pulse

This pulse feels as it is were spinning; it is short and moving and feels like the Coix seed *Semen Coicis lachryma jobi* (*Yi Yi Ren*). It feels also like rolling pearls.

This pulse indicates exhaustion of all the Internal Organs.

j) Sesame seed hasty pulse

This pulse is rapid and stops at irregular intervals (like the Hasty pulse); it is small and shaped like a sesame seed.

This pulse indicates exhaustion of Qi and Blood.

A common characteristic of most of the danger pulse qualities is the irregularity of the beat; they therefore indicate a pathology of the heart in a Western sense. Many of them are also rapid, indicating not necessarily Heat, but a complete collapse of Qi and Blood, which makes the pulse rapid.

THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS ON THE PULSE

I list below some drugs and their effects on the pulse. This list is not comprehensive; rather, it is limited to only the effects I have observed in clinical practice. It should be remembered that drugs will not always have the effects listed below as different people react in different ways to the same drug. For example, it is common for antibiotics to cause a partial peeling of the tongue, but in some patients they tend to make the coating thick.

1. TRANQUILIZERS AND HYPNOTICS

Tranquilizers (anxiolytics) and hypnotics (sleeping pills) have a definite influence on the pulse. In my experience, they cause what I call the 'Stagnant' pulse quality (see above).

The tranquilizers pulse feels reluctant to come, as if being suppressed, and seems unlikely to last; it does not flow smoothly and does not have a 'wave'. It is somewhat Wiry, but it does not have the strength or the wave of a truly Wiry pulse.

2. ANTIDEPRESSANTS

a) Tricyclic antidepressants

Tricyclic antidepressants tend to cause the pulse to lose its 'root'; that is, it becomes slightly Empty at the deep level and very slightly Floating.

b) Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)

SSRI antidepressants tend to cause Qi stagnation in the digestive system and affect the Stomach and Spleen.

The Stomach and Spleen pulse position tends to become somewhat Slippery and/or Wiry.

c) Monoamine oxydase inhibitors (MAOIs)

These antidepressants tend to affect the Liver and often cause Liver-Yang rising. They tend to make the pulse Wiry.

3. BETA-BLOCKERS

Beta-blockers are probably the drug with the clearest effect on the pulse. They make the pulse slow, and this definitely should be taken into account – otherwise, we may conclude, wrongly, that the patient suffers from a Cold syndrome. They also tend to make the pulse deep and somewhat weak. In my experience, this type of drug makes pulse reading very difficult, and I almost tend to discount the pulse altogether when a patient is on beta-blockers.

4. ACE-INHIBITORS

ACE-inhibitors affect the Kidneys and make the pulse Deep and Weak on both Rear positions.

5. WARFARIN

Warfarin tends to make the pulse relatively Overflowing and slightly Empty at the middle level.

6. DIURETICS

Diuretics tend to make the pulse slightly empty at the deep level. They may also affect the Kidneys and make the pulse very Weak on both Rear positions.

7. H₂-RECEPTOR ANTAGONISTS

These drugs tend to affect the Stomach and Spleen and may make the Right-Middle position slightly Floating-Empty.

8. INSULIN

Long-term use of insulin makes the pulse slightly Slippery but Hollow.



CHAPTER 50 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The importance of a universal pulse diagnosis language and of memorizing the pulse qualities, description and clinical significance.
- The importance of moving one's fingers distally, proximally, medially and laterally to ascertain the pulse quality.
- A general description, clinical significance, combinations, differentiation from similar pulses and interpretation of each pulse according to Li Shi Zhen is presented.
- The first group of traditional pulse qualities (the eight basic pulses): Floating, Deep, Slow, Rapid, Empty, Full, Slippery and Choppy.
- The Empty type: Weak, Fine, Minute, Soggy, Short, Hollow, Leather, Hidden and Scattered.
- The Full type: Wiry, Tight, Overflowing, Big, Firm, Long and Moving.
- Those denoting rate or rhythm: Knotted, Hasty, Hurried, Intermittent, Slowed-down.
- Three additional qualities (from Dr Shen's experience): Irregular, Stagnant and Sad.
- Different classifications of pulse qualities.
- Pulse terminology of six other contemporary Chinese Medicine authors.
- Pulse qualities at each position, according to Dr Shen and my clinical experience: left-Front (Heart), left-Middle (Liver), left-Rear (Kidney), right-Front (Lungs), right-Middle (Spleen and Stomach) and right-Rear (Small Intestine and Kidneys).
- Qualities indicating dangerous conditions and the influence of medicinal drugs on the pulse.

END NOTES

1. Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine: 1979 A Revised Explanation of the Classic of Difficulties (*Nan Jing Jiao Shi* 难经校释), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 47. First published c.100.
2. Shang Han Lun Research Group of the Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine: 1980 An Explanation of the Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases (*Shang Han Lun Shi* 伤寒论释), Shanghai Science Publishing House, Shanghai, p. 8. 'The Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases' was written by Zhang Zhong Jing c.220 BC.
3. Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine: 1979 A Revised Explanation of the Classic of Difficulties (*Nan Jing Jiao Shi* 难经校释), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 19. First published c. AD 100 BC.
4. The Liliu syndrome is described in Chapter 3 of the 'Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet'. The syndrome is described as follows: 'The patient wants to eat but is reluctant to swallow food and unwilling to speak. He prefers to lie in bed yet cannot lie quietly due to restlessness. He may want to walk about but soon becomes tired. Now and then he may enjoy eating certain foods but at other times he cannot even tolerate the smell of food. He may feel either too cold or too hot but without fever or aversion to cold. He also has a bitter taste in the mouth and the urine is dark. No drugs appear to be effective to cure this syndrome; after taking the medicine there may be vomiting and diarrhoea.'

The disease haunts the patient and although his appearance is normal, he is actually suffering. His pulse is Rapid. This apparently strange syndrome does occur in practice and is seen in patients who are depressed.

5. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 98. First published c.100 BC.
6. Ibid., p. 98.
7. Ibid., p. 118.
8. Ibid., p. 107.
9. Ibid., p. 116.
10. Ibid., p. 98.
11. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 17. First published c.100 BC.

Palpation of Parts of the Body

51

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Palpation of the chest and abdomen

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Introduction

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Palpation is used to detect the temperature, moisture and texture of the skin, the consistency of the deeper tissues and the presence of masses. Palpation is carried out on the skin, hands and feet, chest, abdomen and acupuncture points and channels.

There are three different palpation techniques:

- touching
- stroking
- pressing

Touching consists simply of touching the skin of the patient lightly. This is done to detect the temperature and moisture of the skin and check whether the patient is sweating. Detecting whether the patient is sweating is important in exterior invasions of Wind to differentiate between an Attack of Wind (during which the patient is sweating slightly) and an Attack of Cold (during which the patient is not sweating) within the Tai Yang pattern of invasion of Wind-Cold. The temperature of the skin

of the forehead is also important in exterior invasions of Wind because it reflects the intensity of the 'fever' (or heat emission as defined in [Chapter 43](#)).

Stroking consists of stroking the skin and deeper tissues of the patient and is usually carried out on the chest, abdomen and limbs. Stroking serves to determine the presence of tenderness or swelling and is used to distinguish Full from Empty conditions.

Pressing consists of pressing relatively hard to still deeper levels, usually of the abdomen. It serves to determine the presence of pain and masses and is used to establish the Full or Empty condition of the Internal Organs.

These three techniques correspond to three different degrees of pressures, reflecting the state of different energetic layers. Thus, *touching* reveals the state of the skin, *stroking* that of the flesh and muscles, and *pressing* that of the sinews and bones and of the Internal Organs.

The discussion of palpation will be articulated into the following sections:

1. Palpation of the chest and abdomen
2. Palpation of the skin
3. Palpation of the hands and feet
4. Palpation of acupuncture points

1. PALPATION OF THE CHEST AND ABDOMEN

Palpation of the chest and abdomen is an important part of diagnosing by palpation because it reveals the state of the internal organs. [Chapter 35](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: '*The internal organs reside inside the chest and abdominal cavity like precious objects in a chest, each with its own specific location.*'¹ The 'Simple Questions' in [Chapter 22](#) says: '*When the Heart is diseased there is pain in the centre of the chest and hypochondrial fullness and pain ... When the Kidneys are diseased there is swelling of the abdomen.*'²

Palpation of the chest and abdomen will be articulated under the following headings:

- a) Introduction
 - i) Temperature
 - ii) Texture
 - iii) Distension versus fullness
 - iv) Tenderness
 - v) Lumps
 - vi) Umbilical pulse
- b) Palpation of the chest
 - i) Apical pulse
 - ii) Chest
 - iii) Breast
- c) Palpation of the abdomen
 - i) Hypochondrium
 - ii) Epigastrium
 - iii) Umbilical region
 - iv) Central abdomen
 - v) Lateral-lower abdomen
 - vi) Central-lower abdomen

a) Introduction

i) Temperature

When palpating the abdomen, one should first feel the temperature of different areas; if the abdomen feels cold on palpation, it indicates either Cold or Yang deficiency; if the abdomen feels hot on palpation, it indicates Heat. If the pulse picture indicates Heat but the abdomen is not hot on palpation, this indicates external Heat. In children, a hot sensation of the abdomen on palpation often indicates retention of Food.

ii) Texture

Next, one should check the texture of the abdomen – that is, whether it feels soft or hard. The normal abdomen should feel relatively soft on superficial palpation but firm with deeper pressure. If the abdomen feels very soft and flaccid on palpation, it indicates a deficiency condition of the Spleen and Stomach if it is the epigastrium, or the Spleen and Kidneys if it is the lower abdomen; the latter sign is common in women who have had several children.

If the abdomen feels hard on palpation, it indicates a Full condition, which is usually Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Dampness or retention of Food, each of these conditions presenting with different subjective symptoms, which are distension, pain and fullness.

Palpation of the abdomen is quite important in invasions of Wind, especially in children, because if the abdomen feels soft, the pathogenic factor is usually still on the Exterior, whereas if it feels hard, the pathogenic factor has penetrated to the Interior.

TEXTURE OF THE ABDOMEN

- Soft and flaccid epigastrium: Stomach and Spleen deficiency
- Soft and flaccid lower abdomen: Spleen and Kidney deficiency
- Hard: Full condition
 - Qi stagnation (with feeling of distension)
 - Dampness (with feeling of fullness)
 - Blood stasis (with pain)
 - Retention of Food (with feeling of fullness)
- Soft during invasions of Wind in children: pathogenic factor still on the Exterior
- Hard during invasions of Wind in children: pathogenic factor in the Interior

iii) Distension versus fullness

One can distinguish distension from fullness on palpation. Besides being subjective symptoms, distension and fullness are also objective signs. The distended abdomen feels hard but elastic, like a drum, whereas a fullness of the abdomen manifests with a hardness of the abdomen but without distension on palpation.

iv) Tenderness

The abdomen should then be palpated to check for tenderness. If a light palpation elicits pain, it indicates a Full condition which may be Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Dampness, retention of Food, Heat or Cold. If the pressure of palpation relieves the pain, it indicates a deficient condition of the Spleen and Stomach if it is in the epigastrium, or of the Spleen, Kidneys and Liver if it is in the lower abdomen. If the abdomen feels tender only under deep pressure, it usually indicates Blood stasis. If superficial pressure of the abdomen relieves a pain but elicits a discomfort on deeper pressure, it indicates a combined condition of Deficiency and Excess – for example, stagnation of Liver-Qi with Spleen-Qi deficiency.

v) Lumps

Abdominal masses are called *Ji Ju*. *Ji* indicates actual abdominal masses which are fixed and immovable; if there is an associated pain, its location is fixed. These masses are due to stasis of Blood, and I call them 'Blood masses'. *Ju* indicates abdominal masses which come and

TENDERNESS ON PALPATION

- Tenderness on light palpation: Full condition (Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Dampness, Retention of Food, Heat or Cold)
- Tenderness relieved by palpation: Stomach and Spleen deficiency (epigastrium) or Liver and Kidney deficiency (lower abdomen)
- Tender on deep pressure: Blood stasis
- Tenderness relieved by superficial pressure and elicited by deeper pressure: combined Deficiency and Excess

go, do not have a fixed location and are movable. If there is an associated pain, it too comes and goes and changes location. Such masses are due to stagnation of Qi, and I call them 'Qi masses'.

Actual abdominal lumps, therefore, pertain to the category of abdominal masses and specifically *Ji* masses – that is, Blood masses.

Another name for abdominal masses was *Zheng Jia*, *Zheng* being equivalent to *Ji* (i.e., acute, fixed masses) and *Jia* being equivalent to *Ju* (i.e., non-substantial masses from stagnation of Qi). The term *Zheng Jia* normally referred to abdominal masses occurring only in women; however, although these masses are more frequent in women, they do occur in men as well.

When palpating the abdomen, one should feel for lumps. Lumps that come and go and are associated with distension indicate Qi stagnation, whereas lumps that are fixed and possibly painful indicate Blood stasis. Soft and movable abdominal lumps may indicate Phlegm. Lumps in the left-lower abdominal region may simply indicate faeces in the colon.

Palpable lumps in the lower abdomen may be due to Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Damp-Phlegm or Damp-Heat.

Abdominal lumps due to Qi stagnation normally feel soft and come and go with emotional moods; if due to Blood stasis, they feel hard on palpation and are usually associated with pain. If abdominal lumps are from Damp-Heat, they also may be painful and, when palpated, very tender; if from Damp-Phlegm, they feel softer than lumps from Blood stasis or Damp-Heat. A typical example of an abdominal lump from Blood stasis is a myoma, and an example of that from Damp-Phlegm or Damp-Heat is an ovarian cyst.

TWO TYPES OF ABDOMINAL MASSES

- Qi (*Ju* or *Jia*): relatively soft masses that come and go
- Blood (*Ji* or *Zheng*): hard, fixed masses

vi) Umbilical pulse

Finally, palpation of the abdomen should always include palpation of the pulse around the umbilicus by using three fingers and the thumb simultaneously, with the middle finger above the umbilicus, the index and ring fingers to the right and left, respectively, and the thumb below the umbilicus (Fig. 51.1).

From the Chinese point of view, this is the pulsation of the Original Qi, which should be strong and regular. If this pulse pulsates more than five times per breathing cycle, it indicates Heat in the Penetrating and Directing Vessels. If this pulse feels faint, and there is a feeling of heat on palpation, it indicates Yin deficiency in the Penetrating Vessel. If this pulse is slower than two

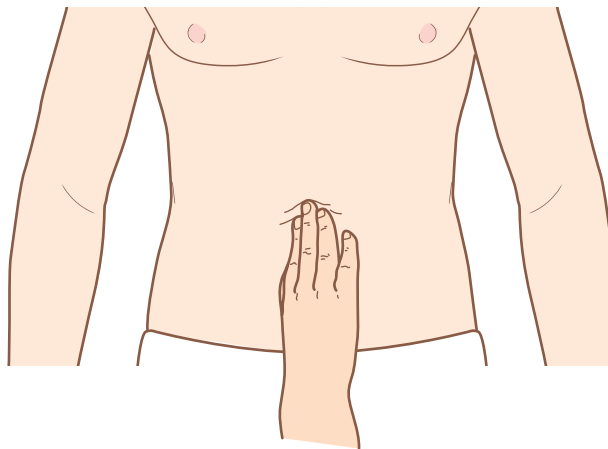


Figure 51.1. Feeling the umbilical pulse.

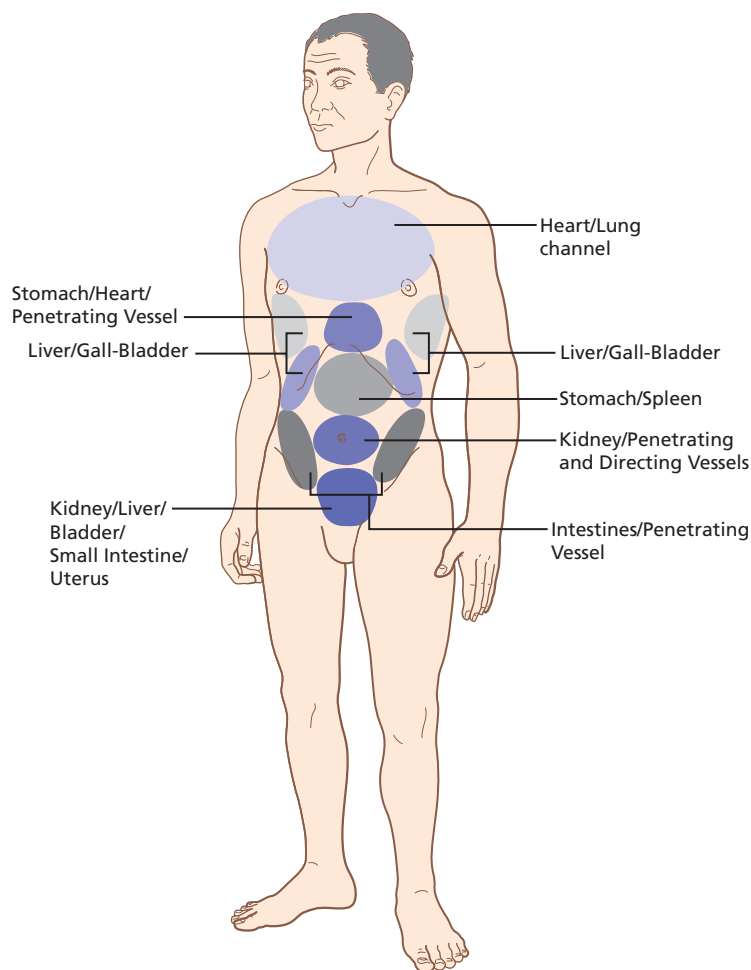


Figure 51.2. Areas of the abdomen.

pulsations per breathing cycle, it indicates a severe deficiency of the Original Qi. If the pulsation around the umbilicus is slow and feels cold on palpation, it indicates a deficiency of the Fire of the Gate of Life.

The abdominal areas influenced by the various internal organs are illustrated in [Fig. 51.2](#).

b) Palpation of the chest

Palpation of the chest includes palpation of the following areas:

- a) Apical pulse
- b) Chest
- c) Breast

UMBILICAL PULSE

- Strong and regular umbilical pulse: healthy Original Qi
- Umbilical pulse which beats more than five times per breathing cycle: Heat in the Penetrating and Directing Vessels
- Faint umbilical pulse with a feeling of heat on palpation: Yin deficiency in the Penetrating Vessel
- Umbilical pulse slower than two pulsations per breathing cycle: severe deficiency of the Original Qi
- Slow umbilical pulse with a feeling of cold on palpation: deficiency of the Fire of the Gate of Life

i) Apical pulse

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 13](#)

The apical pulse can be palpated in the fifth intercostal space: from a Western, anatomical point of view, it is the palpation of the left ventricle of the heart, whereas in ancient Chinese medicine it was called the pulsation of *Xu Li*, which relates to the Great Connecting channel of the Stomach and reflects the state of the Gathering Qi (*Zong Qi*). For a description of the ancient interpretation of this pulsation, see [Chapter 13](#) under 'Diagnosis by Observation'.

The pulsation of the apical pulse reflects the state of the Gathering Qi, and, under normal conditions, it should be felt clearly but not be hard and should be relatively slow; this indicates a normal state of the Gathering Qi. If the pulsation of the apical pulse is feeble and without strength, it indicates a deficiency of the Gathering Qi and therefore of Lungs and Heart; if the pulsation feels too strong and hard, it indicates an Excess condition of the Lungs and/or Heart. However, in some cases, when the left ventricle is enlarged, the apical pulse may feel 'large' but empty, indicating Heart-Qi deficiency.

If the apical pulse stops and starts, it may indicate that the patient has suffered a severe shock; this sign also may be seen in alcoholism.

The pulsation of the apical pulse also should be compared with that of the radial pulse, and the two should be similar to each other; for example, if the apical pulse feels feeble, the radial pulse should also feel Weak, Empty or Choppy. A discrepancy between the apical and the radial pulse is a poor prognostic sign and often indicates heart disease.

The apical pulse may become affected by short-term influences such as shock, fright or a severe outburst of anger, in which case it becomes very rapid.

APICAL PULSE

- Clearly felt, not hard, relatively slow: normal
- Feeble and without strength: deficiency of the Gathering Qi (*Zong Qi*)
- Strong and hard: excess condition of the Lungs and/or Heart
- Large but empty: Heart-Qi deficiency
- Stopping and starting: severe shock or alcoholism
- Discrepancy between apical and radial pulse: poor prognosis
- Rapid: shock, fright or outburst of anger

ii) Chest

The centre of the chest corresponds to the Heart and the rest of it to the Lungs. Palpation of the chest reveals the state of the Heart, Lungs and Pericardium, and, generally speaking, tenderness on palpation indicates a Full condition of one of these organs. For example, if the chest feels very tender even on light palpation in the centre, in the area of Ren-17 Shanzhong, it may indicate Heart-Blood stasis.

If the chest is tender on palpation in the areas around the centre, it usually indicates an Excess condition of the Lungs and often retention of Phlegm in the Lungs. By contrast, if palpation of the chest relieves discomfort, it indicates a Deficiency condition of the Heart or Lungs. If superficial palpation of the chest relieves a pain but the patient feels discomfort with a deeper pressure, it indicates a combined condition of Deficiency and Excess.

CHEST

- Tender with light palpation of Ren-17: Heart-Blood stasis
- Tender around the centre: excess condition of the Lungs
- Tenderness relieved by palpation: deficiency condition of Heart or Lungs
- Tenderness relieved by light palpation but elicited by deeper palpation: combined Deficiency and Excess

iii) Breast

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 12](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

Palpation of the breasts in women is carried out when there are breast lumps. Breast lumps may be malignant or benign. The purpose of palpation in Chinese medicine is never to replace the Western diagnosis – we should never rely on palpation to distinguish benign from malignant lumps – but to identify the patterns causing them. The palpation of lumps should take into consideration their hardness, their edges and their mobility.

- relatively soft: Phlegm
- relatively hard: Blood stasis
- distinct edges: Phlegm
- indistinct edges: Toxic Heat
- mobile on palpation: Phlegm
- immovable on palpation: Blood stasis or Toxic Heat.

Small, movable lumps with distinct edges and which change size according to the menstrual cycle normally indicate fibrocystic disease of the breast, which is usually due to a combination of Phlegm and Qi stagnation. A single, relatively hard, movable lump with distinct edges,

which also may be slightly painful, usually indicates a fibroadenoma which, from the Chinese point of view, is due to a combination of Phlegm and Blood stasis. A single, hard, immovable lump with indistinct margins, without pain, may indicate carcinoma of the breast, which, in Chinese medicine, is usually due to a combination of Phlegm, Qi stagnation and Blood stasis occurring against a background of disharmony of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels.

MOST COMMON BREAST LUMPS

- Fibrocystic disease (Qi stagnation and Phlegm): small, multiple, movable lumps with distinct edges, changing size according to the menstrual cycle
- Fibroadenoma (Blood stasis): single, relatively hard, movable lump with distinct edges, possibly painful
- Carcinoma of the breast (Blood stasis and Phlegm): single, hard, immovable, painless lump with indistinct margins

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

c) Palpation of the abdomen

The palpation areas of the abdomen are as follows:

- Hypochondrium
- Epigastrium
- Umbilical area
- Central-lower abdomen
- Lateral-lower abdomen
- Central-lower abdomen

See [Fig. 51.3](#).

i) Hypochondrium

The hypochondrium includes the lateral side of the rib cage and also the area immediately below it. It reflects the state of the Liver and Gall-Bladder. If the hypochondrium is distinctly tender on palpation, it indicates stagnation of Liver-Qi, Liver-Blood stasis or Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder. If palpation of the hypochondrium relieves the patient's discomfort, it may indicate Liver-Blood deficiency.

ii) Epigastrium

The epigastric area is the area contained between the xiphoid process, the costal margins and the umbilicus. Palpation of the epigastrium reveals primarily the condition xiphoid process of the Stomach and Spleen. The normal epigastrium should feel elastic but neither hard nor too soft. The area immediately below the xiphoid

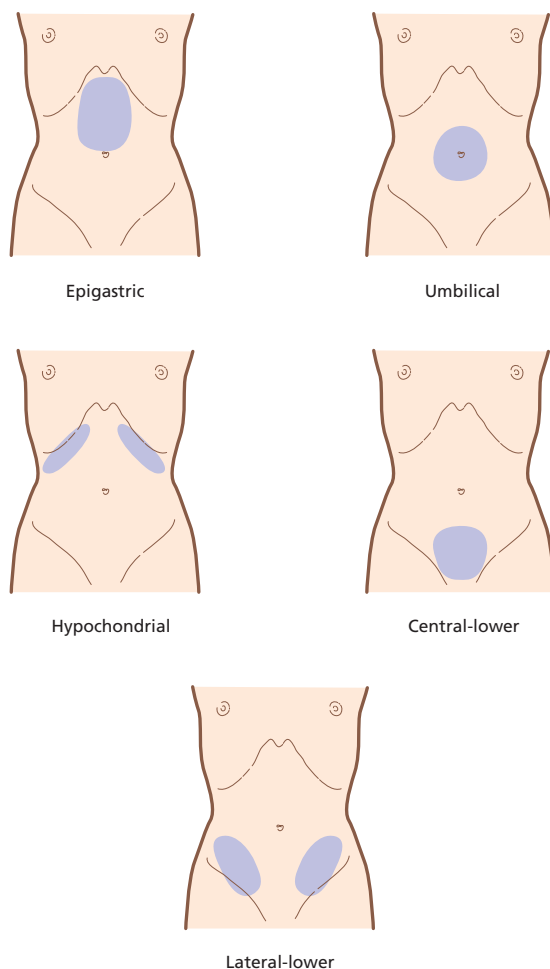


Figure 51.3. Abdominal areas.

process reflects the condition of both the Stomach and the Heart and should feel relatively softer than the rest of the epigastrium; if this area feels hard on palpation, it often indicates stagnation of Qi or Blood of the Heart, usually due to emotional problems.

If the epigastrium feels hard on palpation, it indicates an Excess condition of the Stomach, which may be stagnation of Qi, Blood stasis, Dampness or retention of Food. If the epigastrium feels distended like a drum, it indicates Qi stagnation. If the patient has a subjective sensation of fullness but the epigastrium is soft on palpation, it indicates a condition of mixed Deficiency and Excess, often characterized by Stomach-Heat and Spleen-Qi deficiency. If palpation of the epigastrium relieves the patient's discomfort, it indicates a Deficiency condition of the Stomach.

EPIGASTRIUM

- Elastic, neither hard nor soft: healthy state of Stomach and Spleen
- Hardness in the area below the xiphoid process: stagnation of Qi or Blood of the Heart, usually due to emotional problems
- Hard: excess condition of the Stomach (Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Dampness or retention of Food)
- Distended like a drum: Qi stagnation
- Soft on palpation with subjective sensation of Fullness: Stomach-Heat and Spleen-Qi deficiency

iii) Umbilical region

The umbilical region reflects the state of the Kidneys and of the Penetrating Vessel. It should feel elastic but not hard. If it feels hard and full on palpation, this indicates either stagnation of Qi or Blood stasis in the Penetrating Vessel. If it is painful on palpation, this indicates Blood stasis in the Penetrating Vessel; if it feels very soft on palpation, this indicates a Kidney deficiency and a deficiency of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels.

iv) Central abdomen

The central abdomen includes the areas to the right and left of and immediately below the umbilical area. These areas reflect the state of the Stomach, Spleen and Intestines. If these areas feel hard on palpation, they indicate Dampness or retention of Food in the Intestines. If they are painful on palpation, they indicate Blood stasis. If distended like a drum, they indicate Qi stagnation. If the central abdomen feels soft on palpation, it indicates a Spleen deficiency.

v) Lateral-lower abdomen

The lower-lateral abdominal areas are called *Shao Fu*, and they reflect the state of the Intestines and of the Penetrating Vessel. If hard on palpation, they indicate either Dampness in the Intestines or Blood stasis in the Penetrating Vessel. If painful on palpation, they indicate Blood stasis in the Penetrating Vessel. A feeling of mass in the lateral-lower abdomen also indicates Blood stasis in the Intestines or in the Penetrating Vessel.

vi) Central-lower abdomen

The central-lower abdominal area is called *Xiao Fu* and reflects the state of the Intestines, Kidneys and Bladder. If this area feels hard on palpation, it may indicate Dampness in the Intestines or Bladder, whereas if it is

painful on palpation, it may indicate Qi stagnation or Blood stasis in the Intestines or Bladder.

2. PALPATION OF THE SKIN

Palpation of the skin includes palpation of the body skin and palpation of the forearm. Palpation of the skin will be articulated under the following headings:

- a) Body skin
 - i) Temperature
 - ii) Moisture
 - iii) Texture
 - iv) Forehead
- b) Forearm diagnosis
- c) Palpation of temples in children

a) Body skin

Palpation of the body skin is aimed at assessing its temperature, moistness and texture.

i) Temperature

The temperature of the skin reflects conditions of Heat or Yang deficiency. If the skin feels hot on palpation, it usually indicates a condition of Heat; if it feels Cold, it indicates Yang deficiency.

A hot feeling of the skin on palpation may be related more specifically to the five energetic layers of skin, muscles, blood vessels, sinews and bones according to the amount of pressure exerted. These five energetic layers reflect the state of the Lungs, Spleen, Heart, Liver and Kidneys, and they may be grouped into three – the skin, muscles and blood vessels, and sinews and bones – corresponding to three different pressures of palpation.



There are three energetic layers of palpation:

- skin
- muscles and blood vessels
- sinews and bones

The *skin* energetic layer is felt by palpating very lightly; if it feels hot on palpation and the feeling of heat subsides after several minutes, this indicates exterior Heat from invasion of Wind or Empty Heat from Yin deficiency affecting the Lungs.

The *muscles and blood vessels* energetic layer is felt by palpating the skin with a slightly harder pressure; if it feels hot at this level, this indicates interior Heat affecting the Heart or Spleen.

The *sinews and bones* energetic layer is felt by palpating the skin with a still harder pressure; if it feels hot at this level, this indicates Empty Heat from Yin deficiency, usually affecting the Liver and Kidneys.

SKIN ENERGETIC LAYERS PALPATION

- Skin
 - Hot: Wind-Heat or Empty Heat from Yin deficiency
- Muscles and blood vessels
 - Hot: interior Heat in Heart or Spleen
- Sinews and bones
 - Hot: Empty Heat from Yin deficiency of Liver or Kidneys

ii) Moisture

Palpation of the skin should take into consideration the moisture of the skin; the normal skin should be slightly moist and elastic. If the skin is too moist from sweat, this indicates either Yang deficiency or Heat, whereas if it is moist and greasy, this indicates Dampness. If the skin feels dry on palpation, it indicates Blood deficiency, Yin deficiency or severe Blood stasis. If the skin feels rough on palpation, this indicates severe Blood deficiency, often as an underlying condition of Painful Obstruction syndrome (*Bi*).

iii) Texture

If the skin feels rough and very dry and scaly, this indicates severe deficiency and dryness of Blood together with a deficiency of the Spleen. If the skin feels swollen on palpation and the exerting of pressure with the thumb leaves it dented, this indicates oedema from Yang deficiency; if the skin feels swollen but the exerting of pressure with the thumb does not leave it dented, this indicates Qi stagnation or Blood stasis.

iv) Forehead

Palpating the forehead to feel its temperature was, in ancient China, a method of ascertaining whether the patient was suffering from a 'fever'. An objective sensation of heat on palpation of the forehead is called *Fa Re*, which literally means 'emission of heat' and is often translated as 'fever'. This is not entirely correct, as the patient may or may not have a fever. Whenever 'fever' is mentioned in this context, it is intended as an objective feeling of heat of the forehead on palpation. An objective sensation of heat on palpation of the forehead together with a subjective feeling of aversion to cold indicates invasion of external Wind; such a sensation

together with a subjective feeling of heat indicates internal Heat.

The temperature of the forehead should be compared with that of the palms: if the forehead is hotter than the palms, this generally indicates exterior Heat, whereas if the palms are hotter than the forehead, this generally indicates interior Heat.

PALPATION OF SKIN

- Hot feeling: Heat
- Cold feeling: Cold or Yang deficiency
- Moist skin (from sweat): Yang deficiency or Heat
- Moist and greasy skin: Dampness or Phlegm
- Dry skin: Blood or Yin deficiency (or severe Blood stasis)
- Rough skin: Blood deficiency
- Rough, dry and scaly skin: Blood deficient and dry
- Swollen skin with indentation on pressure: oedema
- Swollen without indentation on pressure: Qi stagnation or Blood stasis

b) Forearm diagnosis

Diagnosis by palpating the palmar surface of the forearm between the elbow and the wrist crease was described in [Chapter 74](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis', which says: *'The rapid or slow, large or small and slippery or rough condition of the skin of the forearm, as well as the firmness of the muscles, reflects the location of the disease.'*³

This quotation refers to palpation of the palmar surface of the forearm. 'Rapid or slow' refers to how the hand glides over the patient's skin; that is, 'rapid' means that the patient's skin is smooth and the practitioner's hand glides easily, and 'slow,' means that the patient's skin is rough and the practitioner's hand does not glide easily. 'Large or small' refers to the size of the muscles of this part of the arm, and 'slippery or rough' refers to the texture of the skin of the forearm.

The same chapter of the 'Spiritual Axis' says:

*'When the skin of the forearm is slippery and moist, it indicates invasion of Wind; if it is rough, it indicates Wind Painful Obstruction Syndrome; if it is like fish scales, it indicates Phlegm-Fluids; if it feels hot and the pulse is Full, it indicates a Heat disease; if the skin is cold and the pulse is small, it indicates diarrhoea and deficiency of Qi; if the skin is extremely hot and then becomes cold, it indicates combined Heat and Cold; if the skin feels cold but becomes gradually hotter on palpation, it also indicates combined Heat and Cold.'*⁴

In other words, the texture of the skin of the inner surface of the forearm reflects invasions of external Wind if it feels slightly moist, Blood deficiency if it feels dry, Wind Painful Obstruction syndrome if it feels rough, and severe Spleen deficiency with Phlegm if it feels rough and coarse like fish scales. In addition, the temperature of the skin of the inner forearm reflects conditions of Heat or Cold (particularly of the Intestines).

PALPATION OF THE FOREARM (CHAPTER 74 OF THE 'SPIRITUAL AXIS')

- Hot elbow: Heat above the waist
- Hot hand: Heat below the waist
- Hot inner flexure of the elbow: Heat in the chest
- Hot lateral side of the elbow: Heat in the upper back
- Hot inner aspect of the arm: Heat in the abdomen
- Hot 3 to 4 *cun* below the lateral side of the elbow: worms in the Intestines
- Hot palm: Heat in the abdomen
- Cold palm: Cold in the abdomen
- Bluish blood vessels on the thenar eminence: Cold in the Stomach

Besides palpation, the skin of the inner aspect of the forearm should be observed for slackness, tightness, moistness, dryness, protrusion and shrinking. If the inner aspect of the forearm looks slack and loose, it indicates Heat; if it is tight, it indicates Cold. If the forearm is moist, it indicates Wind invasion; if it is dry, it indicates Blood or Yin deficiency. If the forearm skin seems to be protruding and sticking out, it indicates a Full condition; if it looks shrinking and withered, it indicates an Empty condition.

The 'Detailed Discussion of the Essence of Pulse Diagnosis' (*Mai Yao Jing Wei Lun*) developed the above topography of the forearm from Chapter 74 of the 'Spiritual Axis' into a detailed map of correspondence between areas of the inner forearm and parts of the body (Fig. 51.4).⁵

Ling Shu Chapter 74 (forearm diagnosis)

'If the elbow is hot, it indicates that the region above the waist is hot; if the hand only is hot, it indicates that the region below the waist is hot. If the anterior aspect of the elbow is hot, it indicates that the chest is hot; if the posterior aspects of the elbow is hot, it indicates that the shoulders and back are hot. If the middle of the arm is

*hot, it indicates that the waist and abdomen are hot. If the region 3-4 *cun* below the posterior aspects of the elbow is hot, it indicates that there are worms in the intestines. If the palm of the hand is hot, it indicates Heat in the abdomen; if the palm is cold, it indicates Cold in the abdomen. If there are blue vessels on the thenar eminence, it indicates Cold in the Stomach.'*⁶

c) Palpation of temples in children

In babies younger than 6 months, palpation of the temples is used for diagnosis. The area to palpate is that between the end of the eyebrow and the temple hairline (Fig. 51.5).

This area is palpated by gently resting the index, middle and ring fingers between the end of the eyebrow and the temporal hairline with the ring finger nearest the end of the eyebrow. The right hand should be used to feel the left side of the child's temple, and the left hand should be used to feel the right side. If this area feels hot under all three fingers, this indicates an external invasion of Wind; if it feels cold under all three fingers, this indicates an external invasion of Wind-Cold or Accumulation disorder from stagnation in the digestive system. If it feels hot under the index and middle fingers, this indicates Heat above and Cold below; if it feels hot under the middle and ring fingers, this indicates Heat from fright; if it feels hot under the index finger only, this indicates Accumulation Disorder, stagnation of Qi in the chest or breast-feeding problems. Of course, a hot feeling in this area also corresponds to the objective feeling of heat called *Fa Re*, which may or may not correspond to an actual fever.

Finally, the temperature of this area of the baby's forehead should be compared with that of the palms; if the palms are hotter than the temples, this indicates Empty Heat, and if the temples are hotter than the palms, this indicates Full Heat.

TEMPLE PALPATION IN BABIES

- Hot under three fingers: external invasion of Wind-Heat
- Cold under three fingers: external invasion of Wind-Cold or Accumulation Disorder
- Hot under index and middle fingers: Heat above, Cold below
- Hot under middle and ring fingers: Heat from fright
- Hot under the index finger only: Accumulation Disorder, Stagnation of Qi in the chest or breast-feeding problems
- Temples hotter than palms: Full Heat
- Palms hotter than temples: Empty Heat

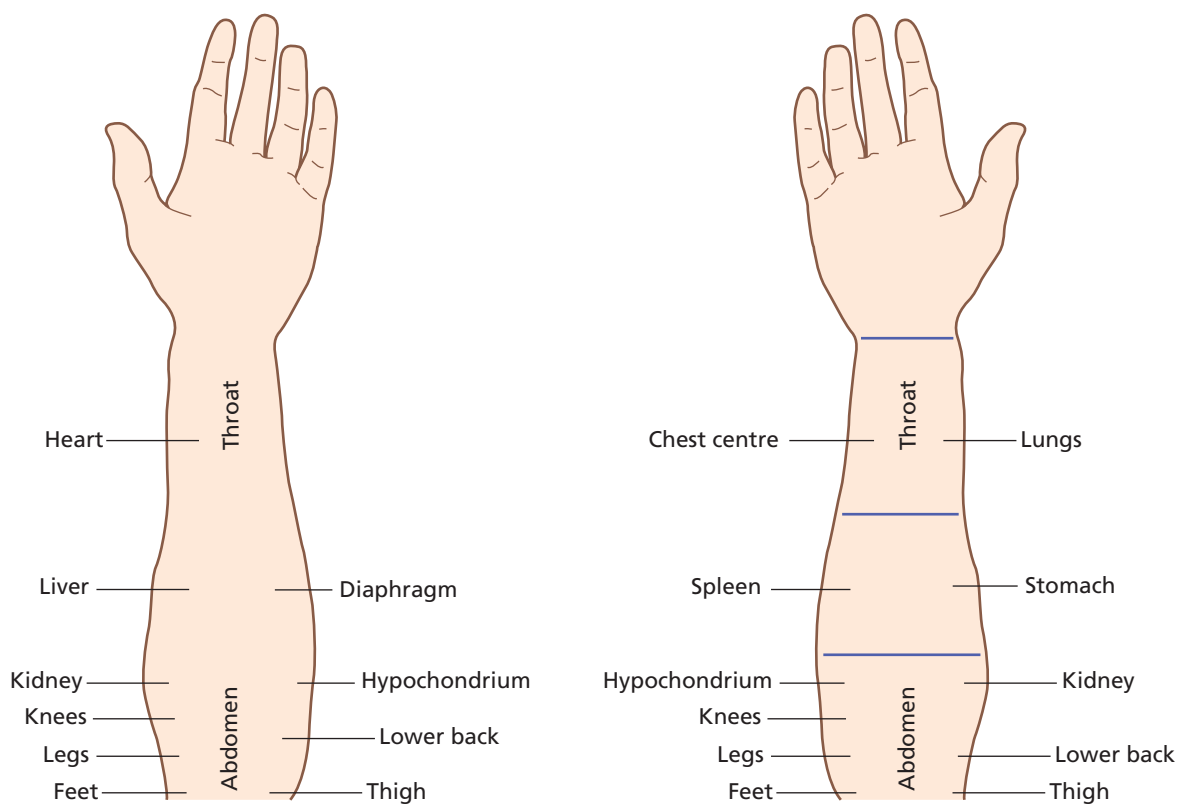


Figure 51.4. Correspondence between areas of the inner forearm and parts of the body.

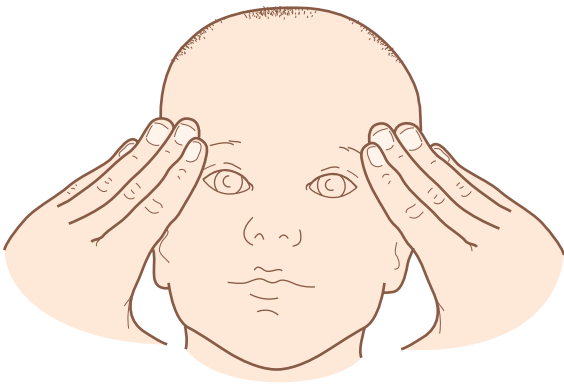


Figure 51.5. Temple palpation in babies.

3. PALPATION OF HANDS AND FEET

a) Temperature

Palpation of the hands and feet, particularly in regard to their temperature, is important to diagnose conditions of Heat and Cold. The most common cause of cold hands and cold feet is Yang deficiency. Lung- and Heart-Yang deficiency will cause coldness of the hands only. Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency will cause coldness, particularly of the feet but often of both hands as well. Stomach-Yang deficiency may cause coldness both of hands and feet. With Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency, a particular feature is that not only the hands and feet but also the entire limbs are cold.

In women, cold hands and feet also may be caused by Blood deficiency; Heart-Blood deficiency may cause cold hands, and Liver-Blood deficiency may cause cold feet.

Stagnation of Liver-Qi may cause coldness of the hands and feet but particularly of the fingers and toes; in this case, the cold feeling is not due to a Yang deficiency but to Qi that is stagnant, being unable to reach the extremities.



In cold hands and feet from Liver-Qi stagnation, it is particularly the fingers and toes that are cold.

There are other, less common causes of cold hands and feet. One is Phlegm in the Interior, which may obstruct the circulation of Qi to the limbs and cause cold hands; this also may happen in the case of

Phlegm-Heat, giving rise to contradictory hot and cold symptoms. Another less common situation of cold hands and feet is when there is a very pronounced and intense Heat in the Interior obstructing the circulation of Qi so that it cannot warm the hands and feet; this condition will also give rise to contradictory hot and cold symptoms. An example of this situation is the condition of Heat in the Pericardium at the Nutritive-Qi level within the Four Levels, which is characterized by symptoms and signs of intense Heat (dark-Red tongue without coating, fever at night, mental restlessness, etc.) but cold hands.

COLD HANDS AND FEET

Common causes

- Cold hands and feet: Spleen- or Stomach-Yang deficiency
- Cold hands: Lung- and/or Heart-Yang deficiency
- Cold feet: Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Cold hands and feet in women: Blood deficiency
- Cold hands in women: Heart-Blood deficiency
- Cold feet in women: Liver-Blood deficiency
- Cold fingers and toes: Liver-Qi stagnation

Less common cause

- Cold hands and feet: Phlegm or Interior Heat obstructing circulation of Qi

b) Palpation and comparison of dorsum and palm

When palpating the hands to feel their temperature, we should distinguish between the dorsum and the palm of the hand: a hot dorsum reflects more conditions of Full Heat, whereas a hot palm reflects more conditions of Empty Heat, though not exclusively so.



A hot dorsum of the hand indicates Full Heat, and a hot palm usually indicates Empty Heat.

In the context of exterior invasions of Wind, palpation of the dorsum of the hands is important because it confirms the exterior nature of the condition. In fact, in exterior invasions of Wind (whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat) there is the characteristic contradiction between the patient's subjective sensation of cold ('aversion to cold') or even shivering and the objective hot feeling of the dorsum of the hands on palpation. The Chinese term *Fa Re*, which is often translated as 'fever' in the context of exterior invasions of Wind, actually refers precisely to this – that is, the *objective* hot feeling

of the dorsum of the hands and forehead on palpation, and the patient may or may not have an actual fever.

Therefore, the comparison between the temperature of the dorsum and the palms of the hands has two interpretations: on the one hand, it helps distinguish Full from Empty Heat, and, on the other hand, in the context of acute diseases, it confirms the exterior nature.

Chapter 74 of the 'Spiritual Axis' relates the temperature of the palm of the hand to the condition of the Intestines: if the palm is hot, it indicates Heat in the Intestines, whereas if it is cold, it indicates Cold in the Intestines.⁷

c) Palpation of feet and hands in children

In children, conditions of Heat are normally reflected on the soles of the feet, which become hot, whereas conditions of Cold are normally reflected on the dorsum of the foot and on the leg, which become cold. Also, in children, cold tips of the fingers may indicate shock or fright, and if the middle section of the fingers is hot, this indicates an external invasion of Wind.

d) Palpation of the nails

Palpation of the hands should include pressing of the nails. When a fingernail is pressed, a white discoloration appears and, under normal conditions, the nail should resume its normal pinkish colour as soon as the pressure is released. If the resumption of the normal pinkish colour occurs slowly, this indicates either Blood deficiency or Blood stasis.

4. PALPATION OF ACUPUNCTURE POINTS

Palpation of acupuncture points will be articulated under the following headings:

- a) Introduction
- b) Front-Collecting (*Mu*) points
- c) Back-Transporting (*Bei Shu*) points
- d) Source (*Yuan*) points

a) Introduction

Palpation of acupuncture points is aimed primarily at checking for tenderness: if a point is very tender, even on superficial pressure, it indicates a Full condition of

that channel or local stagnation. If pressure on the point relieves a particular pain, it indicates an Empty condition of that channel; and if pressure of the point initially relieves a particular pain but then causes a discomfort, it indicates a condition of mixed Deficiency and Excess.

Any acupuncture point may be used diagnostically and, indeed, *Ah Shi* points may be used as well. However, some points have a particular diagnostic significance: the Front-Collecting (*Mu*) points, the Back-Transporting (*Shu*) points and the Source (*Yuan*) points.

b) Front-Collecting (*Mu*) points

With a single exception, the Front-Collecting points are all located on the chest and abdomen. The Chinese character *Mu* literally means to 'raise, collect, enlist, recruit'. In this context, it has the meaning of collecting; that is, these are the points where the Qi of the relevant organs collects or gathers. These points are frequently used in palpation diagnosis because they easily become tender on palpation or even spontaneously when the relevant organ is diseased. They are used diagnostically, particularly, but not exclusively, in acute conditions. For example, the point LU-1 Zhongfu will be tender in acute lung diseases, such as bronchitis; however, the same point also may be tender in chronic asthma.

The Front-Collecting points are:

Lungs: LU-1 Zhongfu
 Large Intestine: ST-25 Tianshu
 Stomach: Ren-12 Zhongwan
 Spleen: Liv-13 Zhangmen
 Heart: Ren-14 Juque
 Small Intestine: Ren-4 Guanyuan
 Bladder: Ren-3 Zhongji
 Kidneys: G.B.-25 Jingmen
 Pericardium: Ren-17 Shanzhong
 Triple Burner: Ren-5 Shimen
 Gall-Bladder: G.B.-24 Riyue
 Liver: LIV-14 Qimen

LU-1 Zhongfu is particularly useful to diagnose conditions of Emptiness or Fullness of the Lung in interior diseases, such as acute or chronic bronchitis, asthma and emphysema. LU-2 Yunmen is also frequently tender on palpation in the same conditions.

ST-25 Tianshu is a very important point in abdominal diagnosis because it readily reflects Full or Empty conditions, not only of the Large Intestine, of which it is the Front-Collecting point, but also of the Small Intestine.

ST-25 is also often the centre of stagnation of Qi or Blood stasis in the Intestines, in which case the abdomen feels distended on palpation. This point is also one where Dampness in the Intestines frequently accumulates, in which case it will feel hard on palpation.

Ren-12 Zhongwan is an extremely important point which should always be palpated because it reflects Full or Empty conditions of the Stomach. A distended feeling on palpation indicates stagnation of Qi, and a hard feeling on palpation indicates Dampness or retention of Food; if the point feels very soft on palpation and the hand sinks down easily, it indicates a condition of deficiency of the Stomach. When palpating Ren-12, other associated points should be palpated because they all reflect the state of the Stomach; these points are ST-20 Chengman, KI-17 Shangqu and ST-21 Liangmen.

LIV-13 Zhangmen reflects Full and Empty conditions of the Spleen, and one can frequently identify a feeling of distension on palpation of this point, which indicates stagnation of Qi in the Spleen. When palpating LIV-13, other associated points indicating the state of the Spleen should be palpated too, especially KI-18 Shiguan, Ren-9 Shuifen and ST-21 Liangmen.

Ren-14 Juque is very important to palpate because it readily reflects Full and Empty conditions of the Heart, especially when caused by emotional problems. The consistency and feeling of the area around this point should be compared and contrasted with that of the lower abdomen around Ren-6 Qihai; the area around Ren-14 should feel relatively soft compared with the area around Ren-6, which should not be hard, but should be harder than Ren-14. When the area around this point feels distended or hard, it usually indicates stagnation of Qi affecting not only the Heart but often the Lungs and Stomach as well, generally caused by emotional problems. If the area around Ren-14 feels too soft and the hand sinks easily, it indicates a deficiency condition of the Heart. When palpating Ren-14, we also should always palpate Ren-15 Jiuwei because, although it is not the Front-Collecting point of the Heart, it very much functions as one, and palpation of this point, therefore, has the same diagnostic significance as that of Ren-14.

Ren-4 Guanyuan indicates Full or Empty conditions of the Small Intestine, but in my experience this is a secondary aspect of its palpation. I feel that the condition of the Small Intestine is also reflected by palpation of other points such as ST-25 Tianshu, ST-27 Daju, ST-28 Shuidao and ST-29 Guilai. By contrast, palpation of Ren-4 Guanyuan is important to show Full or Empty

conditions of the Uterus and of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels. If this point feels distended on palpation, it indicates stagnation of Qi in the Uterus; if it feels hard on palpation, it indicates retention of Dampness in the Uterus; and if it feels hard with a sensation of a mass, it indicates Blood stasis in the Uterus. If this point feels very soft and the hand sinks easily, it indicates a condition of deficiency of the Uterus and of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels (this finding is common in multiparous women).

Ren-3 Zhongji readily reflects Full or Empty conditions of the Bladder on palpation. However, palpation of this point also reflects the condition of the Liver channel, especially in urinary conditions. For example, if this point feels distended on palpation, it indicates stagnation of Qi, not only in the Bladder, but also in the Liver channel, usually causing urinary problems. If this point feels hard on palpation, it indicates retention of Dampness in the Bladder and/or in the Liver channel.

G.B.-25 Jingmen reflects diseases of the Kidney organ, and if it is tender on palpation, it may indicate the presence of a kidney infection.

Ren-17 Shanzhong indicates Full and Empty conditions of the Pericardium according to the same general principles, depending on whether it feels hard or soft on palpation. However, to determine conditions of the Heart and Pericardium, palpation of Ren-14 Juque and Ren-15 Jiuwei is more important.

Ren-5 Shimen reflects the condition of the Lower Burner and particularly Small Intestine, Bladder, Uterus and Kidneys. Hardness here indicates a Full condition of one of these organs, whereas a softness indicates a deficiency of one of these organs but also of the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*).

G.B.-24 Riyue indicates the state of the Gall-Bladder. A hardness at this point indicates Dampness in the Gall-Bladder, and a softness indicates Gall-Bladder Qi deficiency.

LIV-14 Qimen reflects the condition of the Liver. A hardness at this point and tenderness on palpation indicate a Full condition of the Liver (Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Dampness). A softness on palpation indicates Liver-Blood deficiency.

c) Back-Transporting (*Bei Shu*) points

The Back-Transporting points are all located on the Bladder channel on the back and also may be used diagnostically. The same principles that apply to

Front-Collecting points apply to these points; that is, if they are tender on palpation, it indicates a full condition of the relevant organ, whereas if palpation relieves a particular pain, it indicates an Empty condition of that organ. A particular diagnostic significance of the palpation of these points is that they reflect specifically a condition of the relevant organ as opposed to its channel. For example, tenderness on BL-18 Ganshu may indicate a Full condition of the Liver.

The Back-Transporting points are as follows:

Lungs: BL-13 Feishu
 Pericardium: BL-14 Jueyinshu
 Heart: BL-15 Xinshu
 Liver: BL-18 Ganshu
 Gall-Bladder: BL-19 Danshu
 Spleen: BL-20 Pishu
 Stomach: BL-21 Weishu
 Triple Burner: BL-22 Sanjiaoshu
 Kidneys: BL-23 Shenshu
 Large Intestine: BL-25 Dachangshu
 Small Intestine: BL-27 Xiaochangshu
 Bladder: BL-28 Pangguangshu

d) Source (Yuan) points

The diagnostic use of the Source points is described in Chapter 1 of the 'Spiritual Axis', which says: *'If the 5 Yin organs are diseased, abnormal reactions will appear at the 12 Source points. If we know the correspondence of Source points to the relevant Yin organ, we can diagnose when a Yin organ is diseased.'*⁸ This statement clearly indicates that the Source points are in relation with the Original Qi and that changes on the skin over the Source points or tenderness on palpation indicate abnormalities in the relevant Yin organ. It should be noted that Chapter 1 of the 'Spiritual Axis' lists Source points only for the Yin organs as follows:

LU-9 Taiyuan for the Lungs
 P-7 Daling for the Heart
 SP-3 Taibai for the Spleen
 LIV-3 Taichong for the Liver
 KI-3 Taixi for the Kidneys

This makes a total of 10 points (each point being bilateral) and the other two source points listed in this chapter are Ren-15 Jiuwei for Fat tissues and Ren-6 Qihai for Membranes.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- That palpation by touching is carried out to determine temperature and moisture of the skin and Superficial Connecting channels, stroking reveals the texture and firmness of skin and flesh and reveals the state of the Connecting channels and pressing the muscles reveals their firmness and the presence of any masses.
- That palpation of the chest and abdomen reveals the state of the internal organs.
- The different abdominal regions and what to look for on palpation.
- That palpation of the skin includes the body, forearm and temples in babies under 6 months.
- The significance of temperature of hands and feet with particular regard to the common and less common causes of coldness.
- The significance of temperature of the dorsum and palm.
- The significance of paediatric hand and foot temperature and adult nail palpation.
- That acupuncture points are primarily palpated for tenderness to ascertain Full, Empty or mixed conditions.
- The main points palpated and the significance of findings: The Front Collecting (Mu) points representing each Yin and Yang organ, Back Transporting (Bei Shu) points on the Bladder channel and the Source (Yuan) points.

END NOTES

1. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 75. First published ca 100 BC.
2. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 146. First published ca 100 BC.
3. Spiritual Axis, p. 133.
4. Ibid., p. 133.
5. Deng Tie Tao, Practical Chinese Diagnosis (*Shi Yong Zhong Yi Zhen Duan Xue* 实用中医诊断学), Shanghai Science Publishing House, Shanghai, 1988, p. 167.
6. 1981 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 133.
7. Spiritual Axis, p. 133.
8. Ibid., p. 3.

Palpation of Channels

52

CHAPTER OUTLINE

The Connecting channels

Palpation

The Muscle channels

Characteristics

Functions

Palpation

Palpation of the channels in Painful Obstruction Syndrome (Bi)

Palpation of channels

Lung channel

Large Intestine channel

Stomach channel

Spleen channel

Heart channel

Small Intestine channel

Bladder channel

Kidney channel

Pericardium channel

Triple burner channel

Gall-Bladder channel

Liver channel

Besides palpating specific points with a particular diagnostic significance (as described in the previous chapter), palpation diagnosis must include also palpation of the channels. Before discussing the palpation of channels proper, we must discuss the energetic significance of the secondary channels, and in particular the Connecting (*Luo*) channels and the Muscle (*Jing Jin*) channels: these are the two secondary channels that are mostly involved in palpation. The other secondary channels, the Divergent (*Jing Bie*) channels, are not involved in palpation because they lie at a deep level, deeper than the Main channels.

This chapter will be articulated into the following parts:

1. The Connecting channels
2. The Muscle channels

3. Palpation of the channels in Painful Obstruction Syndrome (*Bi*)
4. Palpation of individual channels

1. THE CONNECTING CHANNELS

The Connecting channels are called *Luo Mai*: *Luo* implies the meaning of 'network'. (The Main channels are called *Jing Mai*, and *Jing* implies the meaning of 'line', 'route', and 'way'.) Chapter 17 of the 'Spiritual Axis' confirms that the Connecting channels are 'horizontal' or 'crosswise': '*The Main channels are in the Interior; their branches are horizontal [or crosswise] forming the Luo channels.*'¹

The Connecting channels are more superficial than the Main channels, and they run in all directions, albeit horizontally rather than vertically. In particular, they fill the space between skin and muscles – that is, the *Cou Li* space. The components of each channel system correspond to different energetic layers pertaining to that channel. For example, if we take the Lung channel, the most superficial part of it is the skin overlying the channel pathway; below that, there is the *Cou Li* space – that is, the space between the skin and muscles where the Superficial Connecting channels course; below that, the Connecting channel proper fills the space between the muscles and sinews; below that, there is the Lung Main channel, and below that, the Lung Deep Connecting channel (Fig. 52.1).

It is important to visualize the Connecting channels not as lines but as spaces filled by channels. For this reason, it would be better to call these 'Connecting areas' ('*Luo areas*') rather than 'channels'. The main branches of the Connecting channels that start from the Connecting points and flow to various areas are called *Bie*, or 'divergent' (the same word as that used for Divergent channels). For example, the Connecting channel of the Lungs starts from LU-7 Lieque and flows to the thenar eminence of the thumb. Figure 52.2 illustrates the

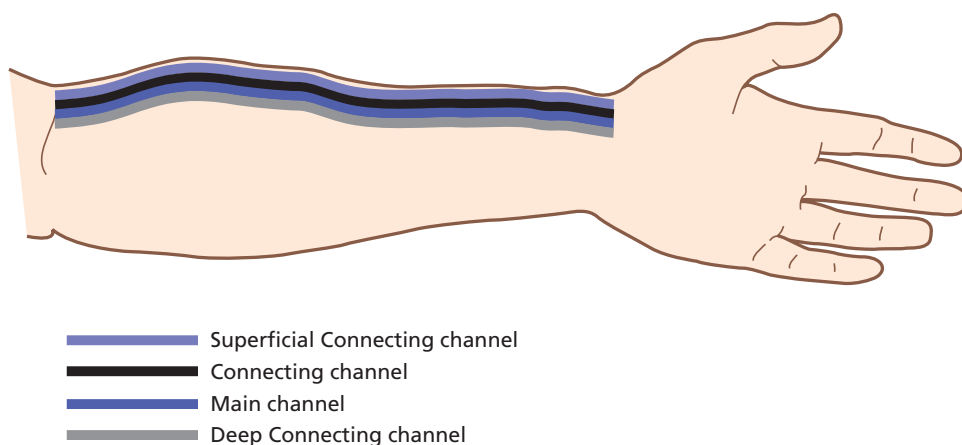


Figure 52.1. Energetic layers of a channel (Lung).

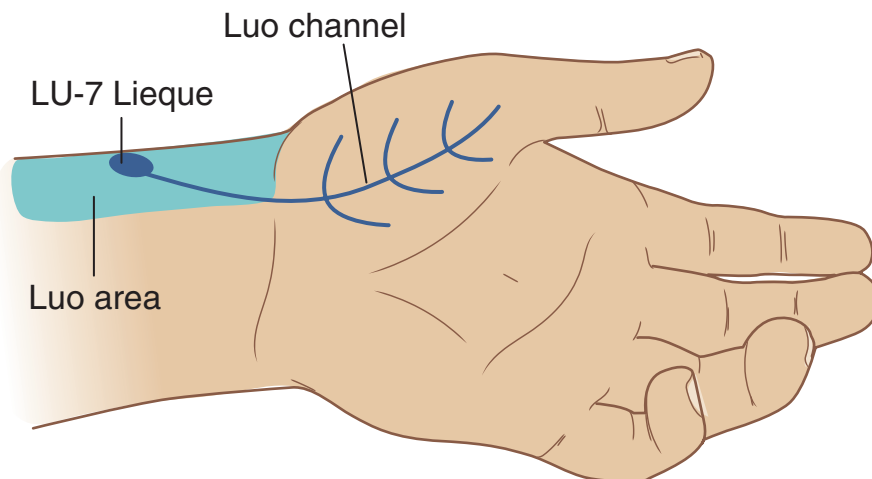


Figure 52.2. Difference between Connecting channel and Connecting area.

difference between the Connecting channel and Connecting area.

Thus, the Connecting channels occupy the space between the Main channels and the skin; however, within this space, there are also degrees of depth. On the superficial layers just below the skin there are smaller Connecting channels called Minute and Superficial Connecting channels. The Minute Connecting channels are called *Sun*, and the Superficial ones are called *Fu*.

Chapter 17 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The Main channels are in the Interior; their branches are horizontal [or crosswise] forming the Luo channels: branching out from these are the Minute Luo.'² Chapter 10 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: 'The more superficial branches of the

channels which can be seen are the Luo channels.'³ Chapter 58 of the 'Simple Questions' says, 'The Minute Luo [Sun Luo] communicate with the 365 points.'⁴

However, the Connecting channels also have a deeper layer beyond the Main channels. These are called the Deep Connecting channels, and they are connected to the blood vessels and Blood in general.

The 12 Main channels are situated between the Yang and Yin Connecting channels. It is through the Yin and Yang Connecting channels that Nutritive and Defensive Qi and Qi and Blood of the main channels spread in all directions, permeating and irrigating the Internal Organs. It is also through the Connecting channels that the essence of the Internal Organs is transported to the main channels and, through them, to the entire body.

The Connecting channels cannot penetrate the big joints of the body as the Main channels do, and they are therefore restricted to the spaces in between the deep pathway of the Main channels and the surface of the body. The Connecting channels also fill the spaces and ‘cavities’ of the body, which are all part of the Triple Burner. This means that most of the stagnation in the body actually occurs in the Connecting channels because they are ‘constricted’ in these spaces (as they cannot course through the large joints) and because they form a net which easily ‘catches’ pathogenic factors or in which Qi and/or Blood become stagnant.

Chapter 10 of the ‘Spiritual Axis’ says: ‘The Luo channels cannot course through the large joints; in order to [enter and] exit they must move by alternate routes. They then enter and come together again under the skin and therefore they can be seen from the outside. To needle the Luo channel one must needle above the accumulation where Blood is concentrated. Even if there is no blood accumulation, one must prick to cause bleeding quickly to drain the pathogenic factors out: if this is not done, Bi syndrome may develop.’⁵

Palpation

Palpation of the limbs involves essentially palpating the Connecting channels and especially the Superficial Connecting channels and the Connecting channels proper. Generally speaking, the more distal the point, the more it reflects the state of the Connecting channels; whereas the more proximal the point, the more it reflects the state of the Main channels. For example, palpation of the forearm from LU-10 to LU-5 and slightly beyond reflects the state of the Lung Connecting channel portion, whereas palpation in the area of LU-2 and LU-1 reflects more the state of the Lung Main channel (and the organ itself). See Fig. 52.3.

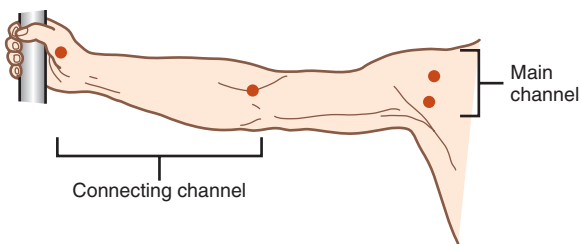


Figure 52.3. Points reflecting Connecting or Main channel on palpation.

Touching the skin reveals its temperature and moisture and reflects the state of the Superficial Connecting channels: a hot sensation indicates Heat of the Superficial Connecting channel, whereas a cold sensation indicates Cold of that particular channel. Dryness of the skin indicates lack of body fluids in the Superficial Connecting channels (related to Lungs and Spleen), whereas excessive sweating indicates a weak state of the space between the skin and muscles (related to Lung-Qi deficiency).

Stroking the skin reveals the texture and firmness of the skin and flesh and reflects the state of the Connecting channels. A flaccid feel indicates a weakness of the Connecting channel of the particular channel palpated, whereas a hardness indicates stagnation in the Connecting channel.

Pressing the muscles reveals the firmness of the muscles and sinews and possible lumps or masses. Stiffness and hardness of the layers below the flesh of the limb indicate a Full condition of the Connecting channels (stagnation of Qi and/or Blood), whereas flaccidity indicates a condition of Emptiness of the Connecting channel.

Chapter 10 of the *Ling Shu* (diagnosis of Connecting channels) reads: ‘In terms of diagnosis according to the Luo channels, a bluish colour of the Luo channels [visible on the skin] indicates Cold or pain while redness of the Luo channels indicates Heat. If there is Cold in the Stomach, the Luo channels of the thenar eminence are bluish; if there is Heat in the Stomach, the Luo channels of the thenar eminence will be red; if the Luo channels of the thenar eminence are black it indicates Bi Syndrome with prolonged retention of pathogenic factors; if the Luo channels of the thenar eminence appear red, black and blue, it indicates a mixture of Cold and Heat; if the Luo channels of the thenar eminence are blue and short it indicates deficiency of Qi.’⁶

2. THE MUSCLE CHANNELS

The Muscle channels are called *Jing Jin*, which could be translated as ‘channel-like muscles’ or ‘muscles of the channels’. They are discussed in Chapter 13 of the ‘Spiritual Axis’.

Characteristics

The Muscle channels have the following characteristics:

- They are on the surface of the body.
- They do not connect with the Internal Organs.

- They all originate at the extremities.
- They broadly follow the course of the Main channel, with exceptions (e.g., Bladder Muscle).
- They follow the contours of the major muscles overlying the Main channels.

Functions

- They protect the body from trauma.
- They sustain the body in its erect position.
- They maintain the integrity of the body by connecting the '100 bones'.
- They govern the movement of joints.
- They allow movement of the body.
- They contribute to the integration of the surface of the body with the Interior.
- They contribute to the integration and connection within the Yang and within the Yin channels (i.e., the connection between the Greater-Yang, Bright-Yang, and Lesser-Yang channels and that between the Greater-Yin, Lesser-Yin, and Terminal-Yin channels).

Palpation

Palpation of the Muscle channels is done relatively firmly, and it reveals the consistency of the muscles. A hard and stiff feel on palpation indicates either stagnation of Qi or Cold in the Muscle channels, whereas a flaccid feel indicates a deficiency of Qi and/or Blood in the Muscle channels.

The Muscle channels' pathology is essentially related only to invasion of external pathogenic factors or trauma.

3. PALPATION OF THE CHANNELS IN PAINFUL OBSTRUCTION SYNDROME (*Bi*)

Palpation of points along the channel is essential in the treatment of Painful Obstruction Syndrome—this consists not only of palpating actual acupuncture points but also the Ah Shi points. Therefore in order to find the Ah Shi points, the whole channel needs to be palpated.

The choice of points in the treatment of Painful Obstruction Syndrome is based primarily on one or more distal points of the affected channel (usually needed

with reducing or even method) and on several local points according to tenderness on palpation. Palpating the Ah Shi points serves two purposes: in diagnosis, it allows us to identify the affected channel precisely; and in treatment, it allows us to treat the reactive points (because their tenderness indicates the points of local stagnation).

Identifying the affected channel through palpation is absolutely essential for the choice of both distal and local points. For example, in shoulder problems, one must clearly identify the channel involved, which may be the Small Intestine, Triple Burner, Large Intestine or Lung channel.

4. PALPATION OF CHANNELS

Each channel has specific areas that have a particular diagnostic significance on palpation. The following is a discussion of these areas for each channel. For each channel, two aspects of palpation are discussed: palpation of a blood vessel overlying the channel and palpation of the skin overlying the channel. For palpation of the skin, three aspects are discussed: temperature, texture and tenderness.

a) Lung channel

Apart from the palpation of points along the channels, the palpation of the Front position of the radial artery on the right side itself is a form of palpating the Lung channel.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

The axillary artery can be palpated along the channel in the region extending from LU-1 Zhongfu to LU-4 Xiabai. If this feels superficial on palpation, it indicates an external invasion of Wind in the Lung-Defensive-Qi portion; if it feels deep, it indicates an internal Lung problem; if it is rapid, it indicates Lung-Heat, and if it is slow, it denotes Damp-Phlegm or Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs. If the artery pulsation feels empty, it indicates Lung-Qi deficiency, whereas if it feels full, it denotes a Full condition of the Lung such as Phlegm in the Lungs.

ii) Palpation of skin

Temperature

Besides feeling the pulsation of the axillary artery, one should palpate the skin overlying the Lung channel,

again in the area extending from LU-1 Zhongfu to LU-4 Xiabai. If the skin feels hot, it indicates Lung-Heat, whereas if it feels cold, it indicates Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs.

Texture

If the skin feels flaccid, it denotes Lung-Qi deficiency, and if it feels rough and stiff, it indicates a Full condition of the Lungs.

Tenderness

Tenderness on palpation indicates stagnation of Qi and Blood in the Lung channel: if the tenderness is elicited with a light pressure, it indicates stagnation in the superficial layers at the level of the Lung Connecting channel energetic layer; if it is elicited with a deep pressure, it indicates stagnation at the deep energetic layers of the channel – that is, the sinew and bone energetic layers.

PALPATION OF LUNG CHANNEL

Palpation of blood vessel

Axillary artery from LU-1 Zhongfu to LU-4 Xiabai

- Superficial: external invasion of Wind in the Lung-Defensive-Qi portion
- Deep: internal Lung problem
- Rapid: Lung-Heat
- Slow: Damp-Phlegm or Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs
- Empty: Lung-Qi deficiency
- Full: Full condition of the Lung

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Lung-Heat
- Cold: Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs

Texture

- Flaccid: Lung-Qi deficiency
- Rough and stiff: Full condition of the Lungs

Tenderness

- Tenderness with a light pressure: stagnation in the superficial layers of the Lung Connecting channel
- Tenderness with a deep pressure: stagnation at the deep energetic layers of the channel – that is, the sinew and bone energetic layers

b) Large intestine channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Large Intestine channel is the area from L.I.-4 Hegu to L.I.-5 Yangxi and especially the latter where the radial artery can be felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of L.I.-5 Yangxi is superficial and large, it indicates conditions such as facial paralysis, tooth abscess, or external Wind-Heat; if it is deep, it may indicate an intestinal pathology such as abdominal pain, constipation or diarrhoea; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of the Large Intestine, and if it is slow, a Cold condition; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Large Intestine, and if it feels full, a Full condition with stagnation and abdominal pain.

ii) Palpation of skin

Temperature

If the skin in the area of L.I.-4 Hegu and L.I.-5 Yangxi feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel, often causing a tooth abscess or tonsillitis; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Large Intestine with symptoms such as chronic diarrhoea; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Large Intestine with symptoms such as Damp-Heat diarrhoea.

Tenderness

If the area between L.I.-4 Hegu and L.I.-5 Yangxi is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels (with symptoms such as facial tingling), whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chronic tendinitis of the shoulder or elbow with long-standing stagnation. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

c) Stomach channel

i) Palpation of blood vessel

The two areas with diagnostic significance are ST-42 Chongyang and ST-9 Renying.

ST-42 Chongyang

The dorsal artery can be felt at this point. If the pulsation feels superficial, it indicates problems of the Stomach

LARGE INTESTINE CHANNEL PALPATION**Palpation of blood vessel**

From L.I.-4 Hegu to L.I.-5 Yangxi

- Superficial and large: facial paralysis, tooth abscess, or external Wind-Heat
- Deep: intestinal pathology
- Rapid: Heat
- Slow: Cold
- Empty: Empty condition
- Full: Full condition with stagnation and abdominal pain

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat condition (teeth, tonsils)
- Cold: Cold condition

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty (diarrhoea)
- Rough and hard: Full (Damp-Heat diarrhoea)

Tenderness

- Tender on light palpation: stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels
- Tender on deep pressure: stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and Deep Connecting channels
- Spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation: Empty condition of the channel
- Tenderness aggravated by palpation: Full condition of the channel

channel such as headache or sore throat; if it feels deep, it denotes a problem of the Stomach organ with symptoms such as epigastric pain. If the pulsation is rapid, it indicates Heat in the Stomach channel with symptoms such as thirst and problems of the teeth or gums from Heat; if it feels slow, it indicates Cold in the Stomach channel. If the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Stomach with symptoms such as a dull epigastric pain, whereas if it is full, it indicates a Full condition of the Stomach with symptoms such as epigastric pain from stagnation.

ST-9 Renying

The carotid artery can be felt at this point. This is a Window of Heaven point regulating the flow of Qi to and from the head. If the carotid pulse feels full and rapid, it indicates a Full condition with excess of Yang in the head; if it feels empty, it indicates an Empty condition with a deficiency of Qi and/or Blood in the head.

ii) Palpation of skin

The area around ST-42 Chongyang is palpated.

Temperature

If the skin feels hot on palpation, it indicates a condition of Heat of the Stomach channel, which may be causing gum or breast problems (in women); if the skin feels cold, it indicates a Cold condition of the Stomach with symptoms such as dull epigastric pain.

Texture

If the skin in the area of ST-42 Chongyang feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Stomach with symptoms such as dull epigastric pain, whereas if it feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Stomach which may be causing a sharp epigastric pain or a breast pathology (in women).

Tenderness

If the area is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels with symptoms such as facial paralysis; if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates stagnation of Qi and/or Blood in the Connecting channels proper and Main channels with symptoms such as chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome along the Stomach channel.

If there is tenderness that is alleviated by pressure, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if it is aggravated by pressure, it indicates a Full condition of the channel.

d) Spleen channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Spleen channel is the area from SP-11 Jimen to SP-12 Chongmen, where the femoral artery can be felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of SP-11 Jimen to SP-12 Chongmen is superficial and large, it indicates skin conditions such as erysipelas; if it is deep, it may indicate an intestinal pathology such as abdominal pain or fullness; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of the Spleen channel; and if it is slow, a Cold condition of the organ with symptoms such as diarrhoea; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Spleen with symptoms such as lassitude, weakness and loose stools; and if it feels full, a Full condition with stagnation and abdominal pain.

STOMACH CHANNEL**Palpation of blood vessel**

ST-42 Chongyang and ST-9 Renying

ST-42 Chongyang

- Superficial: Stomach channel problems (head, throat)
- Deep: problems of the Stomach organ (epigastric pain)
- Rapid: Heat in the Stomach channel (gums, mouth)
- Slow: Cold in the Stomach channel
- Empty: Empty condition of the Stomach (dull epigastric pain)
- Full: Full condition of the Stomach (stagnation)

ST-9 Renying

- Full and rapid: Full condition with excess of Yang in the head
- Empty: Empty condition with a deficiency of Qi and/or Blood in the head

Palpation of skin

Around ST-42 Chongyang

Temperature

- Hot: Heat of the Stomach channel (gums or breast in women)
- Cold: Cold condition of the Stomach (epigastrium)

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition of the Stomach (epigastrium)
- Rough and hard: Full condition of the Stomach (could be breast pathology in women)

Tenderness

- Tender on light palpation: stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels
- Tender on deep pressure: stagnation of Qi and/or Blood in the Connecting channels proper and Main channels with symptoms such as chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome along the Stomach channel
- Tenderness that is alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of the channel
- Tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of the channel

Tenderness

If the area between SP-11 Jinmen and SP-12 Chongmen is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels, whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chronic groin pain. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

SPLEEN CHANNEL PALPATION**Palpation of blood vessel**

From SP-11 Jimen to SP-12 Chongmen

- Superficial and large: skin rashes
- Deep: intestinal pathology
- Rapid: Heat in Spleen channel
- Slow: Cold condition (diarrhoea)
- Empty: Empty condition (loose stools, tiredness)
- Full: stagnation in Intestines

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat in channel
- Cold: Cold (limbs)

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition (diarrhoea)
- Rough and hard: Full condition (Damp-Heat diarrhoea)

Tenderness

- Tender on light palpation: stagnation in Superficial Connecting channels
- Tender on deep pressure: stagnation in Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of channel

ii) Palpation of skin**Temperature**

If the skin in the area of SP-11 Jinmen and SP-12 Chongmen feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel, often causing erysipelas; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as cold limbs.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Spleen with symptoms such as chronic diarrhoea; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Spleen with symptoms such as Damp-Heat diarrhoea.

e) Heart channel

The diagnostic areas for palpation on the Heart channel are HE-7 Shenmen, where the ulnar artery can be felt, and HE-1 Jiquan, where the axillary artery can be felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of HE-7 Shenmen and HE-1 Jiquan is superficial and large, it indicates conditions such as red eyes from Heart-Heat or erysipelas; if it is deep, it may indicate a condition with palpitations and chest pain; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of

the Heart channel with symptoms such as tongue ulcers, whereas if it is slow, a Cold condition such as Chest Painful Obstruction Syndrome may be present; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Heart with symptoms such as anxiety and poor memory, and if it feels full, it denotes a Full condition with symptoms such as mental restlessness.

ii) Palpation of skin

Temperature

If the skin in the area of HE-7 Shenmen and HE-1 Jiquan feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel, often causing red eyes, hot palms or erysipelas; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition often causing chest pain.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Heart channel with signs such as contraction of the little finger; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Heart channel such as Heart-Heat causing tongue ulcers.

Tenderness

If the areas of HE-7 Shenmen and HE-1 Jiquan are tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels, whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chronic Chest Painful Obstruction Syndrome. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

f) Small intestine channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Small Intestine channel is the area around S.I.-16 Tianchuang, where the cervical artery can felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of S.I.-16 Tianchuang is superficial and large, it indicates conditions such as headache from invasion of external Wind; if it is deep, it may indicate a urinary pathology such as urinary retention; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of

HEART CHANNEL PALPATION

Palpation of blood vessel

From HE-7 Shenmen to HE-1 Jiquan

- Superficial and large: Heart-Heat (eyes)
- Deep: palpitations and chest pain
- Rapid: Heat in Heart channel (tongue ulcers)
- Slow: Chest Painful Obstruction Syndrome
- Empty: Empty condition (mental)
- Full: Full condition (mental)

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat (eyes)
- Cold: Cold (chest)

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition of channel (hands)
- Rough and hard: Full condition of channel (tongue ulcers)

Tenderness

- Tenderness on light palpation: stagnation in Superficial Connecting channel
- Tenderness on deep pressure: stagnation in Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of the channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of the channel

the Small Intestine with symptoms such as burning on urination, and if it is slow, a Cold condition with symptoms such as pale-frequent urination; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Small Intestine with urinary symptoms, and if it feels full, a Full condition with stagnation and abdominal pain or urinary retention.

ii) Palpation of skin

Temperature

If the skin in the area of S.I.-16 Tianchuang feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel, often causing tonsillitis or ear infections; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition of the Small Intestine with borborygmi and diarrhoea.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Small Intestine with symptoms such as frequent-pale urination; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Small Intestine, often with symptoms such as a stiff and painful neck.

Tenderness

If the area around S.I.-16 Tianchuang is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels (with symptoms such as numbness of the neck muscles), whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chronic tendinitis of the shoulder or stiff neck with long-standing stagnation. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

SMALL INTESTINE CHANNEL PALPATION

Palpation of blood vessel

Area around S.I.-16 Tianchuang

- Superficial and large: external Wind
- Deep: urinary pathology
- Rapid: Heat with urinary symptoms
- Slow: Cold with urinary symptoms
- Empty: Empty condition with urinary symptoms
- Full: Full condition with abdominal pain and urinary retention

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat in channel (tonsils and ears)
- Cold: Cold in organ (diarrhoea)

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition with urinary symptoms
- Rough and hard: Full condition of channel (neck)

Tenderness

- Tenderness on light palpation: stagnation in Superficial Connecting channel (neck)
- Tenderness on deep pressure: stagnation in Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel (shoulder and neck)
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of channel

g) Bladder channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Bladder channel is the area around BL-40 Weizhong, where the popliteal artery can be felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of BL-40 Weizhong is superficial and large, it indicates conditions such as

headache and neck ache from invasion of external Wind; if it is deep, it may indicate a urinary pathology such as scanty urination with oedema; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of the Bladder with symptoms such as burning on urination, and if it is slow, a Cold condition with symptoms such as frequent-pale urination; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Bladder with symptoms such as urinary incontinence or enuresis, and if it feels full, a Full condition with symptoms such as urinary retention.

ii) Palpation of skin

Temperature

If the skin in the area of BL-40 Weizhong feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel, which may cause skin eruptions along the channel; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as cold and weak legs.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Bladder with symptoms such as backache from Deficiency and weak legs; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Bladder with symptoms such as urinary retention.

Tenderness

If the area around BL-40 Weizhong is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels (with symptoms such as scalp tingling), whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chronic backache from long-standing stagnation. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

h) Kidney channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Kidney channel is the area around KI-3 Taixi, where the posterior tibial artery can be felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of KI-3 Taixi is superficial and large, it indicates conditions such as headache and neck ache from invasion of external Wind; if it is deep,

BLADDER CHANNEL PALPATION**Palpation of blood vessel**

Area around BL-40 Weizhong

- Superficial and large: external Wind
- Deep: urinary pathology
- Rapid: Heat (burning on urination)
- Slow: Cold (frequent urination)
- Empty: Empty condition of organ
- Full: Full condition of organ

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat condition of channel
- Cold: Cold condition of channel (legs)

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition (legs and back)
- Rough and hard: Full condition (urinary)

Tenderness

- Tenderness on light palpation: stagnation in Superficial Connecting channel
- Tenderness on deep pressure: stagnation in Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of channel

it may indicate a urinary pathology such as scanty urination with oedema or gynaecological problems; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of the Kidneys with symptoms such as burning on urination, and if it is slow, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as frequent-pale urination; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Kidneys with symptoms such as urinary incontinence or enuresis, and if it feels full, it denotes a Full condition with symptoms such as urinary retention.

ii) Palpation of skin**Temperature**

If the skin in the area of KI-3 Taixi feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel, which may cause skin eruptions along the channel; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as feeling cold, backache and frequent-pale urination.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Kidneys with symptoms such as backache from Deficiency and weak legs; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Kidneys with symptoms such as urinary retention.

Tenderness

If the area around KI-3 Taixi is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels (with symptoms such as scalp tingling), whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chronic backache from long-standing stagnation. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

KIDNEY CHANNEL PALPATION**Palpation of blood vessel**

Area around KI-3 Taixi

- Superficial and large: external Wind
- Deep: urinary or gynaecological condition
- Rapid: Heat (urinary)
- Slow: Cold (urinary)
- Empty: Empty condition (urinary)
- Full: Full condition (urinary)

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat condition of channel
- Cold: Cold condition of channel

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition (back)
- Rough and hard: Full condition (urinary)

Tenderness

- Tenderness on light palpation: stagnation in Superficial Connecting channel
- Tenderness on deep pressure: stagnation in Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of channel

i) Pericardium channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Pericardium channel is the area around P-8 Laogong, where the common palmar digital artery can be felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of P-8 Laogong is superficial and large, it indicates conditions such as fullness of the chest; if it is deep, it may indicate chest pain from stagnation; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of

the Pericardium with symptoms such as mental restlessness and hot chest, whereas if it is slow, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as chest pain from Yang deficiency; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Pericardium with symptoms such as palpitations, insomnia and an empty feeling of the chest, and if it feels full, it denotes a Full condition with symptoms such as mental restlessness and manic behaviour.

ii) Palpation of skin

Temperature

If the skin in the area of P-8 Laogong feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel which may cause hot palms; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as feeling of cold and a dull chest ache.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Pericardium with symptoms such as an empty feeling of the chest; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Pericardium with symptoms such as chest pain.

Tenderness

If the area around P-8 Laogong is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels (with symptoms such as scalp tingling), whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chest pain from long-standing stagnation. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

j) Triple burner channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Triple Burner channel is the area around T.B.-22 Heliao, where the superficial temporal artery can be felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of T.B.-22 Heliao is superficial and large, it indicates conditions such as headache and neck ache from invasion of external Wind; if it is deep, it may indicate a urinary pathology; if it is rapid, it

PERICARDIUM CHANNEL PALPATION

Palpation of blood vessel

Area around P-8 Laogong

- Superficial and large: fullness of the chest
- Deep: chest pain from stagnation
- Rapid: Heat condition of Pericardium (mental)
- Slow: chest pain from Yang deficiency
- Empty: Empty condition (mental)
- Full: Full condition (mental)

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat condition of channel
- Cold: Cold condition (chest)

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition (chest)
- Rough and hard: Full condition (chest)

Tenderness

- Tenderness on light palpation: stagnation in Superficial Connecting channel
- Tenderness on deep pressure: stagnation in Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of channel

denotes a Heat condition of the Triple Burner with symptoms such as ear ache, and if it is slow, a Cold condition with symptoms such as frequent-pale urination; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Triple Burner with symptoms such as urinary incontinence or enuresis, and if it feels full, a Full condition with symptoms such as fullness of the chest.

ii) Palpation of skin

Temperature

If the skin in the area of T.B.-22 Heliao feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel, which may cause ear infections; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as cold and weak legs or a urinary pathology.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Triple Burner with symptoms such as weak arms; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Triple Burner with symptoms such as red skin eruptions along the channel.

Tenderness

If the area around T.B.-22 Heliao is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels (with symptoms such as face tingling), whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chronic tendinitis of the shoulder from long-standing stagnation. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

TRIPLE BURNER CHANNEL PALPATION

Palpation of blood vessel

Area around T.B.-22 Heliao

- Superficial and large: external Wind
- Deep: urinary pathology
- Rapid: Heat (ear)
- Slow: Cold (urinary)
- Empty: Empty condition (urinary)
- Full: Full condition (chest)

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat condition of channel
- Cold: Cold condition of channel

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition (arms)
- Rough and hard: Full condition (channel)

Tenderness

- Tenderness on light palpation: stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channel
- Tenderness on deep pressure: stagnation in the Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of the channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of the channel

it may indicate a Gall-Bladder pathology with symptoms such as hypochondrial pain; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of the Gall-Bladder with symptoms such as ear ache or red eyes, and if it is slow, a Cold condition with symptoms such as headache or watering eyes; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Gall-Bladder with symptoms such as chronic leucorrhoea, and if it feels full, a Full condition with symptoms such as ear ache.

ii) Palpation of skin

Temperature

If the skin in the area of G.B.-2 Tinghui feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel, which may cause ear infections; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as cold and weak legs.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Gall-Bladder with symptoms such as backache from Deficiency and weak legs; if the skin feels rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Gall-Bladder with symptoms such as hypochondrial pain.

Tenderness

If the area around G.B.-2 Tinghui is tender on light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels (with symptoms such as face and ear tingling), whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as chronic hip or knee pain from long-standing stagnation. If there is a spontaneous tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

k) Gall-Bladder channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Gall-Bladder channel is the area around G.B.-2 Tinghui, where the superficial temporal artery can be felt.

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of G.B.-2 Tinghui is superficial and large, it indicates conditions such as headache and neck ache from invasion of external Wind; if it is deep,

l) Liver channel

The diagnostic area for palpation on the Liver channel is the area around LIV-3 Taichong (where the dorsal metatarsal artery can be felt), LIV-9 Yinbao, and LIV-10 Wuli (where the femoral artery can be felt).

i) Palpation of blood vessel

If the pulsation in the area of LIV-3 Taichong, LIV-9 Yinbao, and LIV-10 Wuli is superficial and large, it

GALL-BLADDER CHANNEL PALPATION**Palpation of blood vessel**

Area around G.B.-2 Tinghui

- Superficial and large: external Wind
- Deep: hypochondrial pain
- Rapid: Heat (ears, eyes)
- Slow: Cold (head, eyes)
- Empty: Empty condition (vaginal discharge)
- Full: Full condition (ears)

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat (ears)
- Cold: Cold (legs)

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition (back, legs)
- Rough and hard: Full condition (hypochondrium)

Tenderness

- Tenderness on light palpation: stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channel
- Tenderness on deep pressure: stagnation in the Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of the channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of the channel

indicates conditions such as headache and painful eyes; if it is deep, it may indicate a Liver pathology such as Liver-Qi stagnation with symptoms of abdominal pain; if it is rapid, it denotes a Heat condition of the Liver with symptoms such as headache, red eyes, and epistaxis, and if it is slow, a Cold condition with symptoms such as headache or watering eyes; if the pulsation feels empty, it denotes an Empty condition of the Liver with symptoms such as blurred vision and scanty periods, and if it feels full, a Full condition with symptoms such as hypogastric distension and urinary problems.

ii) Palpation of skin**Temperature**

If the skin in the area of LIV-3 Taichong, LIV-9 Yinbao and LIV-10 Wuli feels hot, it indicates a Heat condition of the channel which may cause erysipelas or inflammation of the external genitalia; if it feels cold, it denotes a Cold condition with symptoms such as cold hypogastrium and external genitalia.

Texture

If the skin in the same area feels flaccid, it indicates an Empty condition of the Liver with symptoms such as numbness and weakness of the legs; if the skin feels

rough and hard, it denotes a Full condition of the Liver with symptoms such as hypochondrial pain.

Tenderness

If the area around LIV-3 Taichong, LIV-9 Yinbao, and LIV-10 Wuli is tender on a light palpation, it indicates a stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channels (with symptoms such as genital itching), whereas if it is tender on deep pressure, it indicates a stagnation in the Connecting channels proper and possibly also Deep Connecting channels with symptoms such as hypogastric pain and urinary symptoms. If there is a spontaneous

LIVER CHANNEL PATHOLOGY**Palpation of blood vessel**

From LIV-3 Taichong to LIV-10 Wuli

- Superficial and large: pain in head and eyes
- Deep: Liver-Qi stagnation
- Rapid: Liver-Heat (head, eyes)
- Slow: headache with watery eyes
- Empty: Liver-Blood deficiency
- Full: Liver-Qi stagnation (urinary)

Palpation of skin

Temperature

- Hot: Heat in channel (genitalia)
- Cold: Cold in channel (genitalia)

Texture

- Flaccid: Empty condition (legs)
- Rough and hard: Full condition (hypochondrium)

Tenderness

- Tenderness on light palpation: stagnation in the Superficial Connecting channel
- Tenderness on deep pressure: stagnation in the Connecting channel proper and Deep Connecting channel
- Spontaneous tenderness alleviated by pressure: Empty condition of the channel
- Spontaneous tenderness aggravated by pressure: Full condition of the channel

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

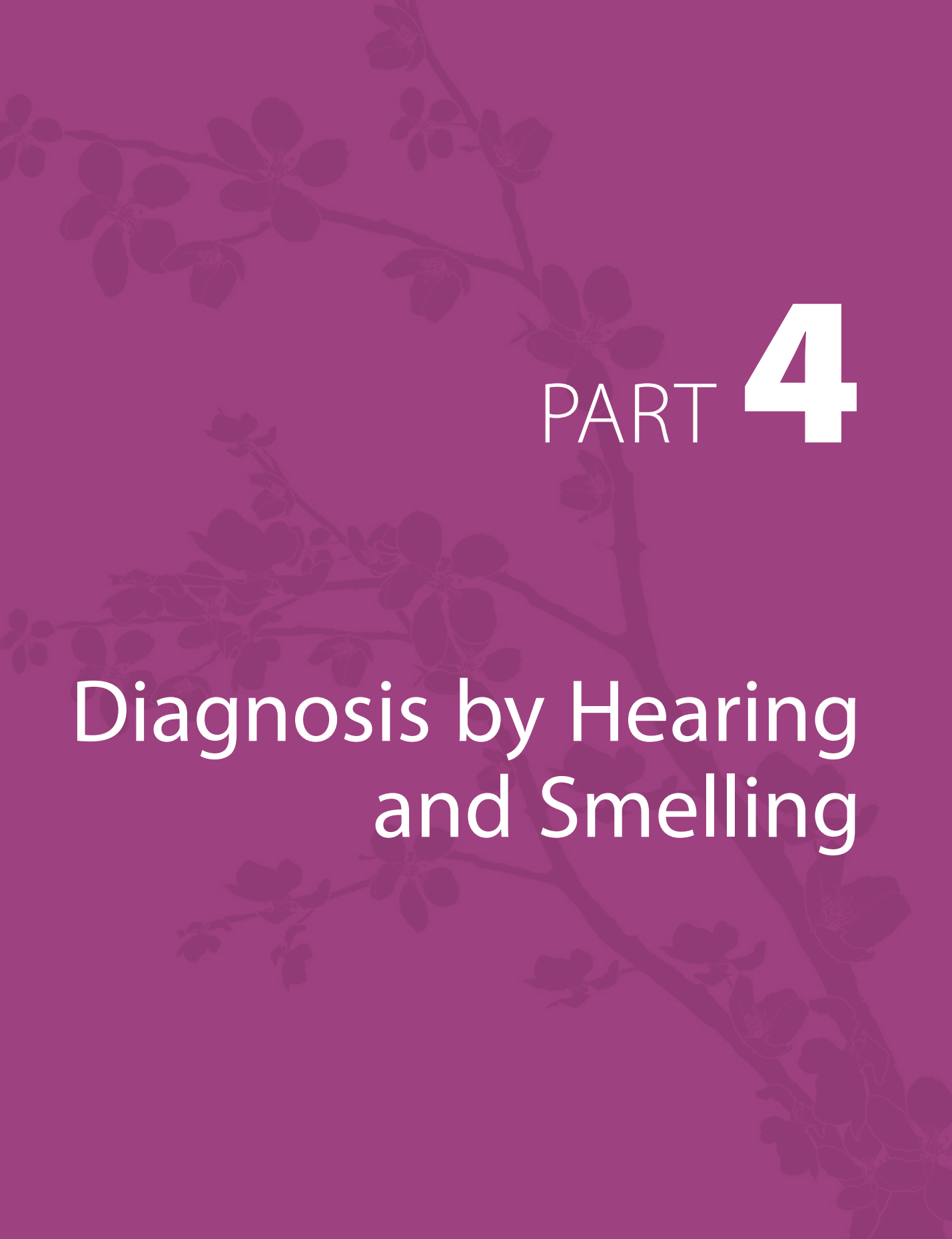
The student now should understand:

- That palpation of the channels includes that of the Connecting (*Luo*) and Muscle (*Jing*) channels, as well as the functions of these channels.
- The role of palpation in Painful Obstruction Syndrome (*Bi*).
- The areas along each of the six Yin and Yang channels that have particular diagnostic significance on palpation: palpation of blood vessel and skin temperature, tenderness and texture.

tenderness that is alleviated by palpation, it indicates an Empty condition of the channel, whereas if the tenderness is aggravated by palpation, it denotes a Full condition of the channel.

END NOTES

1. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 50.
2. Ibid., p. 50.
3. Ibid., p. 37.
4. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 301.
5. Ibid., p. 37.
6. 1981 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine - Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, first published ca 100 BC, p. 38.



PART 4

Diagnosis by Hearing and Smelling

INTRODUCTION

Diagnosis by hearing and smelling is called *Wen* in Chinese, and, interestingly, this character can mean both ‘to hear’ and ‘to smell’. Diagnosis by these means has been an integral part of Chinese medicine since early times. [Chapter 5](#) of the ‘Simple Questions’ mentions hearing in the context of diagnosis in general: ‘A good diagnostician will observe the patient’s complexion and feel his pulse to distinguish Yin from Yang; he will examine whether the complexion is clear or turbid to identify the location of the disease; he will listen to the patient’s panting and breathing and the patient’s voice to diagnose the affliction.’¹

In ancient times the Yin organs were correlated with the five musical notes (the scale of Chinese music has five rather than seven notes) and the five sounds:

- The Liver has the note *Jue* and the sound of shouting.
- The Heart has the note *Zhi* and the sound of laughing.
- The Spleen has the note *Gong* and the sound of singing.
- The Lungs have the note *Shang* and the sound of weeping.
- The Kidneys have the note *Yu* and the sound of groaning.

The ‘Classic of Difficulties’ mentions the sounds and smells in several passages. [Chapter 34](#) lists the colours, sounds, smells, tastes and fluids of each Yin organ. The sounds and smells of each Yin organ in this classic are listed as follows²:

Organ	Sound	Smell
Liver	Shouting	Foul
Heart	Talking	Scorched
Spleen	Singing	Fragrant
Lungs	Weeping	Rotten
Kidneys	Groaning	Putrid

[Chapter 49](#) of the ‘Classic of Difficulties’ says: ‘The Heart controls the sense of smell. When this enters the Heart itself the smell is scorched, when it enters the Spleen it is

fragrant, when it enters the Liver it is foul, when it enters the Kidneys it is putrid, when it enters the Lungs it is rotten.’³ It is interesting that this passage relates the sense of smell to the Heart.

The same chapter of the ‘Classic of Difficulties’ discusses the sounds related to the Yin organs: ‘The Lungs controls the voice [or sound]. When this enters the Liver the sound is shouting, when it enters the Heart it is talking, when it enters the Spleen it is singing, when it enters the Kidneys it is groaning, and when it enters the Lung itself it is weeping.’⁴ [Chapter 61](#) of the same text says: ‘By hearing the five sounds we can diagnose the disease.’⁵

[Chapter 17](#) of the ‘Simple Questions’ has an interesting description of the voice of patient suffering from Dampness: ‘When the Centre [i.e., Middle Burner] suffers from fullness, the rising Qi will cause fear and the voice [of the patient] sounds as if it were coming from the inside of a room [i.e., between walls]: this is due to Dampness in the Centre.’⁶

The same passage then describes the clinical significance of a weak voice and of incoherent speech: ‘When the voice is feeble and interrupted Qi is depleted. If a person cannot look after his personal hygiene [literally the clothes and bedding are messy and soiled] and the speech is incoherent, it means that the Mind is chaotic.’⁷

Part 4 is articulated into two chapters:

[Chapter 53](#): Diagnosis by hearing

[Chapter 54](#): Diagnosis by smelling

END NOTES

1. 1979 The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People’s Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 46. First published ca 100 BC.
2. Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine 1979 A Revised Explanation of the Classic of Difficulties (*Nan Jing Jiao Shi* 难经校释), People’s Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 85. First published ca AD 100.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
6. Simple Questions, pp. 99–100.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

Diagnosis by Hearing

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Introduction

Voice

Normal voice

The voice and the Five Elements

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Coughing

Sneezing

Hiccup

Belching

Vomiting

Sighing

6. Hiccup
7. Belching
8. Vomiting
9. Sighing

1. VOICE

The topics discussed are as follows:

- a) Normal voice
- b) The voice and the Five Elements
- c) Strength and quality of voice
 - i) Nasal voice
 - ii) Hoarse voice
 - iii) Snoring
 - iv) Groaning
 - v) Crying out
 - vi) Stuttering

The sound of the voice is produced by the combined function of many parts of the body, which are influenced by various internal organs in Chinese medicine: the lungs themselves (Lungs), larynx (Lungs), epiglottis (Kidneys), tongue (Heart), teeth (Kidneys), lips (Spleen) and nose (Lungs). For this reason, the voice can reflect the state of Qi in general, because several organs are involved in its production, particularly the Lungs, Heart, Spleen and Kidneys.



The voice is produced by the following organs:

- lungs (Lungs)
- larynx (Lungs)
- epiglottis (Kidneys)
- tongue (Heart)
- teeth (Kidneys)
- lips (Spleen)
- nose (Lungs)

INTRODUCTION

We may start using 'hearing' as an aid to diagnosis as soon as the patient begins to speak, or even when he or she telephones to make an appointment. The sound of the voice gives us an immediate indication of the state of the patient's Qi and, in particular, of his or her Lung-Qi, which is directly reflected in the voice. The voice also reflects the state of the Mind and Spirit: a quiet voice without force and with a sad tone indicates that the Mind and Spirit are affected.

The following diagnostic sounds will be discussed:

1. Voice
2. Speech
3. Crying in babies
4. Breathing and sighing
5. Coughing and sneezing

The voice is an important diagnostic element and one that is used as soon as the patient comes in and greets us. This gives us the very first impression of the person's

Qi in general, a strong voice reflecting a strong Qi and a weak voice indicating Qi deficiency.

The voice is an important reflection of the state of the Mind and Spirit as well because talking in general is controlled by the Heart. Our voice, of course, reflects very closely our mental-emotional state, and we can easily detect sadness, worry, fear or anger in someone's voice.

The voice is a direct manifestation of Lung-Qi, and it readily reflects Lung-Qi's state; the Lungs influence the tone and strength of the voice.

The Heart influences the speech itself in two ways. First, the Heart has a profound influence on the tone and texture of the voice because it controls the tongue, which is a crucial organ in the production of speech. Second, the Heart houses the Mind and Spirit, and the tone and strength of the voice are very much affected by the speaker's mental-emotional state.

The Spleen controls the lips, which are also a crucial factor in the production of speech; obviously this influences the strength and tone of the voice. For example, if Spleen-Qi is deficient, the lips may lack strength and the speech may be unclear. In addition, although the tone and strength of the voice reflect primarily the state of Lung-Qi, they also reflect the state of Qi in general, and therefore of the Spleen, which is the root of Post-Natal Qi.

The Kidneys influence the pitch and quality of the voice because the Original Qi emerging from between the Kidneys reaches the root of the tongue, allowing the larynx to emit sounds.

When listening to the voice, one should assess the overall strength, tone, pitch and quality of the voice itself and the manner of speech (i.e., rapid, slow, confused, slurred, etc.). The manner of speech is discussed in the section '[Speech](#)'.

a) Normal voice

The normal voice should be harmonious, relatively soft, rounded, clear and of the right strength (not too loud or too weak). The normal voice is often compared to the sound emitted by a bell, and the Lungs are compared to the bell itself. Therefore, when the bell is intact, its ringing sound is clear. In a similar way, when Lung-Qi is good and the Lungs are unobstructed by Phlegm, the voice is clear, its tone is melodious and its pitch is not too high or too low. When assessing whether the quality, pitch and tone of the voice are normal, however, there

is no universal standard because the voice should be related to the sex, age and body build of the patient. Therefore, what is too weak a voice for a well-built man might be normal for a small-built old lady.

Allowance should be made also for the emotional state of the patient because this will easily affect the voice. For example, the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (Yi Zong Jin Jian) says: *'When the Heart is affected by excess joy, the voice becomes scattered; when the Heart is affected by anger, the voice becomes indignant and stern; when the Heart is affected by grief, the voice becomes sad and hoarse... when the Heart is affected by love the voice is warm and harmonious. When the Heart is happy, the voice is slow and relaxed.'*¹

b) The voice and the Five Elements

From a Five-Element perspective, there are five tones of voice: shouting for Wood, laughing for Fire, singing for Earth, weeping for Metal and groaning for Water. These tones of voice can be interpreted in two ways: under physiological conditions, these tones are normal for those types – that is, it is normal for a Wood type to have a relatively loud, 'shouting' voice; under pathological conditions, the tone of voice may deviate from its standard by excess or deficiency; therefore, a Wood type may have a voice that is either 'too shouting' or not strong enough.

A shouting voice is loud and is emitted in short, sharp bursts as if that person were reproaching someone. A person with a laughing voice will often have short bursts of laughter within their speech, and the voice itself may have an edge of laughter. A singing tone of voice has a relatively high pitch, is melodious and has a flow of high and low tones like a song. A weeping voice is somewhat hesitant, with a relatively low pitch and a sad tone; in some cases it may sound almost as if the person were about to burst into tears. A groaning voice sounds guttural, has a low pitch and is somewhat croaky.

FIVE-ELEMENT VOICES

- Shouting: Wood
- Laughing: Fire
- Singing: Earth
- Weeping: Metal
- Groaning: Water

c) Strength and quality of the voice

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 83](#)

A strong, loud voice generally indicates a Full condition, whereas a weak, low and quiet voice indicates an Empty condition. When considering the quality of the voice, we should discuss various sounds as follows:

- Nasal voice
- Hoarse voice
- Snoring
- Groaning
- Crying out
- Stuttering

i) Nasal voice

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 83](#)

Apart from the strength of the voice, one should also assess the clarity of it. As mentioned above, the normal voice should sound as clear as a bell. If the voice sounds muffled, this indicates that the passages of the Lungs are obstructed. This obstruction may be caused by external Wind, Phlegm or Dampness.

In Deficient conditions, if the voice sounds muffled but weak, it indicates a deficiency of Qi and Blood or a deficiency of Lung-Qi, usually combined with retention of Dampness or Phlegm in the nasal passages.

ii) Hoarse voice

A hoarse voice in acute conditions always indicates an invasion of Wind-Heat with Dryness in the Lung Defensive-Qi system. If we compare the Lungs to a metal instrument or a bell, in this case the voice becomes hoarse because the bell is 'full' (i.e., the Lungs are obstructed by Wind). In ancient times this was called 'jin full not ringing', *jin* being an ancient metal percussion instrument.

A sudden hoarse voice may also be due to stagnation of Liver- or Lung-Qi affecting the throat because of emotional problems.

A hoarse voice in chronic conditions is due to a deficiency of Yin of the Lungs and Kidneys. In this case the voice becomes hoarse because the bell is cracked (in ancient times this was called 'jin broken and not ringing'). If the voice becomes hoarse suddenly in the course of a serious, chronic disease (e.g., cancer), it indicates a collapse of Yin or Yang and is a bad prognostic sign.

A chronic hoarse voice with swelling of the pharynx may be due to Phlegm and Blood stasis obstructing the throat.

A hoarse voice during pregnancy is due to a pathology of the Connecting channel, which links the Uterus to the Kidneys. As the Kidney channel reaches the root of the tongue, a disturbance of the Connecting channel, connecting the Kidneys to the Uterus during pregnancy, prevents Kidney-Qi from rising to the tongue, thus affecting the voice. This is mentioned in [Chapter 47](#) of the 'Simple Questions'.² This condition normally improves by itself and does not require treatment; in fact, the 'Simple Questions' says that this problem does not require treatment because 'it will be resolved in the tenth month'; that is, when the woman gives birth.

A coarse, deep, raucous voice with sudden onset indicates an invasion of Wind; a nasal voice indicates an invasion of Wind-Cold or Wind-Dampness.

A difficulty in producing sound, with breathlessness and a rattling sound in the throat like the sound of a saw, indicates retention of Phlegm in the Lungs.

iii) Snoring

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 81](#) and [83](#)

Snoring is generally due to Phlegm or Dampness obstructing the nasal passages. However, we should distinguish loud snoring reflecting a purely Full condition of Dampness from Phlegm, from weak snoring reflecting a condition of Dampness or Phlegm against a background of Qi deficiency.

[Chapter 34](#) of the 'Simple Questions' attributes snoring to rebellious Qi of the Stomach channel: '*Inability to sleep with snoring is due to rebellious Qi of the Stomach channel. The three Foot Yang channels all flow downwards; when the Qi of the Stomach channels rebels upwards, it causes snoring.*'³

iv) Groaning

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 83](#)

Groaning generally indicates pain, but we still need to differentiate loud groaning, reflecting a Full condition, from weak and feeble groaning, reflecting a mixed Full/Empty condition, as the cause of the pain. Groaning from pain is usually due to Dampness or Qi stagnation.

v) Crying out

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 83](#)

Crying out indicates severe pain, usually always of a Full nature: it is usually due to Blood stasis, Damp-Heat or Toxic Heat.

vi) Stuttering

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 83](#)

Stuttering may be due to Heart-Blood deficiency or Heart-Fire.

VOICE

- Loud voice: Full condition
- Weak voice: Empty condition
- Muffled voice in acute conditions: invasion of Wind
- Muffled voice in chronic conditions: deficiency of Qi and Blood
- Nasal voice: invasion of Wind-Cold or Wind-Dampness
- Hoarse voice in acute conditions: invasion of Wind-Heat or Qi stagnation
- Hoarse voice in chronic conditions: Yin deficiency (of Lungs and/or Kidneys)
- Hoarse voice in chronic conditions with swelling of the pharynx: Phlegm and Blood stasis
- Sudden hoarse voice in chronic disease: collapse of Yin or Yang
- Hoarse voice during pregnancy: Kidney channel pathology
- Coarse, deep, raucous voice with sudden onset: Invasion of Wind
- Difficulty in emitting sound with breathlessness: Phlegm in the Lungs
- Snoring: Phlegm or Dampness obstructing the nasal passages
- Groaning: pain from Dampness or Qi stagnation
- Crying out: severe pain of a Full nature from Blood stasis, Damp-Heat or Toxic Heat
- Stuttering: Heart-Blood deficiency or Heart-Fire.

Mind's orifices and manic behaviour. Muttering to oneself with a low voice indicates Phlegm obstructing the Mind's orifices.

Hesitation in speech with difficulty in finding words usually indicates Dampness or Phlegm obstructing the brain; this symptom is frequently seen in chronic fatigue syndrome. Speaking and laughing a lot together with abnormal activity at night-time may indicate the manic phase of bipolar disorder.

Delirious speech occurs in high fevers and indicates Heat invading the Pericardium during a febrile disease. Speaking with a very feeble voice, with the speech frequently interrupted and with great difficulty in starting speaking again after stopping, indicates a severe depletion of Qi and is called *Duo Qi*, which literally means 'Robbing of Qi'.

Talking in one's sleep may be due to Full conditions (e.g., Heart-Fire, Gall-Bladder Heat or Stomach-Heat) or to Empty conditions (e.g., Heart-Blood deficiency); in the former case, the talking in one's sleep is agitated and loud, whereas in the latter it is weak.

SPEECH

- Dislike of speaking: Qi deficiency (Lungs and/or Spleen)
- Speaking too much: Full condition
- Slurred speech: Phlegm
- Incoherent, incessant speech: Phlegm-Fire
- Muttering to oneself: Phlegm obstructing the Mind's orifices
- Hesitation in speech with difficulty in finding words: Dampness or Phlegm
- Speaking and laughing a lot: manic behaviour (*Kuang*)
- Delirious speech: Heat in the Pericardium in febrile diseases
- Very feeble, interrupted speech: severe depletion of Qi
- Talking in one's sleep: Heart-Fire, Gall-Bladder Heat, Stomach-Heat, Heart-Blood deficiency

2. SPEECH

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 83](#)

A dislike of speaking generally indicates Qi deficiency of the Lungs and/or Spleen, whereas speaking a lot generally indicates a Full condition, especially Heat of the Heart.

Slurred speech indicates retention of Phlegm and is frequently seen in patients after Wind-Stroke. Incoherent, incessant speech indicates Phlegm-Fire obstructing the

3. CRYING IN BABIES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 90](#)

Listening to a baby's cry forms part of the diagnosis by hearing. If the baby cries with a high pitch and moves the head from side to side, this indicates Accumulation Disorder. If the baby cries with a low sound and intermittently, this indicates Spleen deficiency. If the baby cries with a long, continuous but soft sound, this indicates a Deficient condition and possibly swollen tonsils.

4. BREATHING AND SIGHING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

a) Breathing

The sound of breathing reflects the condition of the Lungs and of the Kidneys. The general principle is the same as for the voice sound; that is, breathing with a weak, low sound indicates a deficiency of the Lungs and/or Kidneys, whereas loud breathing indicates a Full condition. A shallow breathing sound indicates deficiency of Yang, and breathing with a loud sound often indicates Lung-Heat.

Apart from these general principles, pathological breathing sounds may be classified as breathlessness, wheezing, shortness of breath, rebellious Qi and weakness of Qi.

b) Pathological breathing sounds

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

Breathlessness (Chuan) is characterized by difficulty in breathing and shortness of breath with raising of the shoulders, a feature of patients suffering from asthma or other obstructive pulmonary diseases. Such breathlessness can be of a Full or an Empty type. In the Full type, breathing is irregular, loud, and coarse; in the Empty type, the breathing sound is lower and the voice weak. Breathlessness of the Full type is usually due to retention of Phlegm in the Lungs, whereas that of the Empty type is due to Phlegm in the Lungs combined with a deficiency of the Lungs, Spleen, or Kidneys.

Wheezing (Xiao) is characterized by a whistling sound emitted on breathing, often on exhalation; this is often a symptom of asthma. Wheezing indicates retention of Phlegm in the Lungs. Phlegm is the traditional explanation for wheezing in Chinese medicine, but in my experience, in young people suffering from allergic asthma, there is little or no Phlegm, and wheezing is caused by Wind in the Lungs. For a more complete explanation of this concept, see [Chapter 5](#) of the 'Practice of Chinese Medicine'.⁴

Shortness of breath (Duan Qi) is characterized by short, irregular, and rapid breaths but without the pronounced struggling for breath and raising of shoulders seen in breathlessness. Shortness of breath indicates retention of Phlegm in the Lungs combined with Lung deficiency.

Weak breathing (Qi Shao) is characterized by weak, low and short breathing sounds, which indicate a deficiency of Qi of the Lungs and/or Kidneys.

Rebellious-Qi breathing (Shang Qi) is characterized by rapid, short breaths, a cough, a sensation of oppression of the throat, and of energy rising; this is accompanied by a feeling of anxiety, and it is worse lying down. Rebellious Qi may be due to the rising of the Qi of the Penetrating Vessel or to Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs.

THE FIVE PATHOLOGICAL BREATHING SOUNDS

- Breathlessness (*Chuan*): Phlegm in the Lungs
- Wheezing (*Xiao*): Phlegm or Wind in the Lungs
- Shortness of breath (*Duan Qi*): Phlegm in the Lungs with Lung-Qi deficiency
- Weakness of Qi (*Qi Shao*): Qi deficiency (Lungs and/or Kidneys)
- Rebellious Qi (*Shang Qi*): Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel or Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs

c) Sighing

Sighing generally indicates Qi stagnation of the Liver or Lungs, usually deriving from emotional problems, such as repressed anger or frustration if the Liver is involved, or worry and sadness if the Lungs are involved. Sighing with a weak sound may also be due to deficiency of the Spleen and Heart deriving from sadness, grief or pensiveness.

5. COUGHING AND SNEEZING

a) Coughing

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 63](#)

The same general principles apply to the sound of coughing – that is, a cough with a loud sound indicates a Full condition, whereas a cough with a weak sound indicates an Empty condition. Apart from this, a cough that is loud and 'rich' and that sounds 'loose' indicates Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs. A barking cough that sounds loud indicates Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs. A persistent, loud, dry cough with the occasional expectoration of sputum in acute conditions indicates residual Dryness and Phlegm in the Lungs. A persistent, weak, dry cough with the occasional expectoration of sputum in chronic conditions indicates Dry-Phlegm in the Lungs. A persistent, dry, weak cough with a low sound indicates Lung-Yin deficiency.

In children, a barking, loud cough coming in violent bouts with a characteristic whooping sound and often ending with vomiting indicates whooping cough.

COUGH

- Loud sound: Full condition
- Weak sound: Empty condition
- Loud, rich, loose sound: Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs
- Barking cough with loud sound: Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs
- Persistent, dry, loud cough with occasional expectoration of scanty sputum in acute conditions: residual Dryness and Phlegm in the Lungs after an invasion of Wind-Heat
- Persistent, dry, weak cough with occasional expectoration of scanty sputum in chronic conditions: Dry-Phlegm in the Lungs
- Persistent, dry, weak cough with low sound: Lung-Yin deficiency
- Barking, loud cough in violent bouts in children: whooping cough

b) Sneezing

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 58](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Sneezing is usually due to an impairment of the Lung's diffusing of Qi. The normal sneezing that occurs as a reaction to airborne particles entering the nose is an expression of a good state of Yang-Qi, and [Chapter 28](#) of the 'Spiritual Axis' correlates this normal sneezing to the Heart: '*When Yang-Qi is harmonized, it fills the Heart, exits at the nose and causes sneezing.*'⁵ [Chapter 23](#) of the 'Simple Questions' relates sneezing also to the Kidneys: '*The Heart controls belching, the Lungs control coughing, the Liver controls the flow of speech, the Spleen controls swallowing and the Kidneys control sneezing.*'⁶

Sneezing with a loud sound indicates a Full condition, usually due to invasion of external Wind, whereas sneezing with a weak sound indicates an Empty condition of the Lungs (as in allergic rhinitis). Sneezing with profuse nasal discharge indicates invasion of Wind-Cold, but in the absence of Wind invasion, it may be due to an allergy.

In sneezing, I think it is important to differentiate the type due to an acute invasion of Wind from the type due to allergic rhinitis. In an acute invasion of Wind, sneezing has an acute onset and is accompanied by some nasal discharge. This type of sneezing is of a Full nature.

Sneezing from allergic rhinitis is not related to an invasion of Wind, and it may be of a Full or Empty nature. In Full conditions, sneezing has a loud sound; in Empty conditions, it has a low sound.

Table 53.1 Differentiation of sneezing

Type of sneezing	Pathology	Treatment
Acute invasion of external Wind, loud sound	External Wind obstructing the Lung's diffusing action, Full condition	LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-4 Hegu, BL-12 Fengmen, cupping
Persistent sneezing, loud sound, white-watery nasal discharge	Wind lodged in the nose, predominance of Biao (i.e., Wind in the nose), Full condition	LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-4 Hegu, BL-12 Fengmen, BL-13 Feishu
Persistent sneezing, low sound, white-watery nasal discharge	Wind lodged in the nose, predominance of Ben (i.e., deficiency of Kidney-Yang and Governing Vessel), Empty condition	LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-4 Hegu, BL-13 Feishu, BL-23 Shenshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan

Sneezing in invasions of Wind is due to the obstruction of the Lung's diffusing action; sneezing from allergic rhinitis is also due to Wind, but not the same type of Wind as that from external invasions. In addition, in allergic rhinitis there is an underlying deficiency of Kidney-Yang and of the Governing Vessel (as [Chapter 23](#) of the 'Simple Questions', quoted above, says).

The sneezing of allergic rhinitis is accompanied by a profuse, white-watery nasal discharge.

According to some doctors, if, after an invasion of Wind, the pathogenic factor penetrates the Interior and the patient suddenly starts sneezing again, it indicates that the body's Qi is recovering ([Table 53.1](#)).

SNEEZING

- Loud sound: Full condition
- Weak sound: Empty condition
- Acute sneezing: invasion of Wind
- Chronic sneezing: chronic retention of Wind in the nose (allergic rhinitis)
- Sneezing with profuse nasal discharge: invasion of Wind-Cold or allergic rhinitis

6. HICCUP

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 69](#)

Hiccup with a loud, high-pitched sound indicates a Full condition and often Heat; this type of hiccup may be due to Stomach-Qi rebelling upwards, Stomach-Heat, or Liver-Qi invading the Stomach. Infrequent hiccup with a deep but strong sound may be due to Cold in the

Stomach. Infrequent, weak hiccup with a low sound indicates Stomach deficiency. Frequent but weak hiccup indicates Stomach-Yin deficiency.

Acupuncture

Ren-13 Shangwan, P-6 Neiguan, ST-19 Burong.

7. BELCHING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 69](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

Belching with a loud and long sound indicates a Full condition, which may be retention of Food, Stomach-Heat or Liver-Qi invading the Stomach. Belching with a short and low sound indicates a deficient condition, which may be Stomach-Qi deficiency or Stomach-Qi Deficient and Cold.

Acupuncture

Ren-13 Shangwan, P-6 Neiguan, ST-19 Burong, ST-21 Liangmen.

8. VOMITING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 69](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

Vomiting with a loud sound indicates a Full condition, which may be retention of Food, Stomach-Heat, Liver-and Stomach-Heat, or Full Cold in the Stomach. Vomiting with a weak sound indicates a deficiency condition, which may be Stomach-Qi deficiency, Stomach Deficient and Cold, or Stomach-Yin deficiency. Bouts of vomiting, depending on the emotional state, usually indicate rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach.

Acupuncture

Ren-13 Shangwan, P-6 Neiguan, ST-19 Burong, ST-40 Fenglong.

9. SIGHING

Sighing consists of a deep expiration with a short sound. Sighing is very much associated with sadness or worry, and it is usually caused by Qi stagnation of the Lungs and/or Heart in the chest, which is a Full condition. However, sighing may also be associated with Qi or Yang deficiency, in which case the sighing sound would be low and feeble.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student now should understand:

- The importance of the voice as a diagnostic aid; it reflects the state of the Lung-Qi, but it is also influenced by many other organs.
- The importance of listening to the overall strength, tone, pitch and quality of the voice, in addition to the manner of speech.
- The qualities of a normal voice, the sounds pertaining to the Five Elements and the qualities to listen for.
- The clinical significance of pathological breathing sounds and sighing.
- The clinical significance of coughing, sneezing, hiccups, belching and vomiting.

END NOTES

1. Wu Qian: 1977 Golden Mirror of Medicine (*Yi Zong Jin Jian* 医宗金鉴), vol 2, People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 877. First published 1742.
2. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 259. First published ca 100 BC.
3. Simple Questions, p. 199.
4. Maciocia G: *The practice of Chinese medicine*, Churchill Livingstone, 2000, Edinburgh.
5. 1981 Spiritual Axis (*Ling Shu Jing* 灵枢经), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 67. First published ca 100 BC.
6. Simple Questions, p. 150.

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Diagnosis by Smelling

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Clinical significance

Body odour

Odour of bodily secretions

Breath

Sweat

Sputum

Urine and stools

Vaginal discharge and lochia

Intestinal gas

CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Diagnosis by smelling is not a major part of the diagnostic process. It is used mostly to confirm our diagnosis and is seldom a clinching factor. The Five-Element smells mentioned here are useful mostly to correlate to the patient's Element type and to indicate accordance with or discordance from it. For example, a rancid smell in a Wood Element is a pathological exaggeration of a constitutional Wood smell and therefore is less serious than another smell would be. In other words, for a Wood type to have a putrid smell (pertaining to the Kidneys) is more serious than for the same type to have a rancid smell.

There are two quite distinct aspects to diagnosis by smelling: the first is the odour of the patient's body itself, which can give us an idea not only of the prevailing pattern of disharmony, but also of the patient's constitutional type; the second is the odour of certain bodily secretions, which is used only to identify the prevailing pattern of disharmony.

Assuming the patient is not wearing perfume or strong aftershave (I normally ask my patients not to use perfume or aftershave when they come for their first consultation), diagnosis by smelling is carried out as the interrogation progresses. In some cases, the body

odour is quite clear, even overwhelming. If there is no particular odour emanating from the body at the start of the interrogation, in most cases it will become apparent when the patient is lying down, partly undressed, for acupuncture.

Two main aspects of diagnosis by smelling are considered:

1. Body odour
2. Odour of bodily secretions
 - a) Breath
 - b) Sweat
 - c) Sputum
 - d) Urine and stools
 - e) Vaginal discharge and lochia
 - f) Intestinal gas

1. BODY ODOUR

From a Five-Element perspective, the five body odours are as follows: rancid (or 'foul' in Chinese books) for Wood, scorched for Fire, fragrant or sweetish for Earth, rotten for Metal and putrid for Water. From this point of view, these body odours reflect a disharmony in the relevant Element, which may be a Deficiency or an Excess. In a few cases, these body odours are very apparent as soon as the patient comes in, but in most cases these odours are detected only when the patient undresses and especially on the back.

Sometimes, the Five-Element body odour emanates after the needles have been in for about 20 minutes. In my experience, the two most common Five-Element body odours are the putrid (Kidneys) and rancid (Liver) ones: the putrid odour is relatively common in the elderly (presumably due to a decline of Kidney-Qi).

The body odour can be used diagnostically in two ways. In the absence of patterns of disharmony accounting for a particular odour, the body odour reflects the patient's constitutional Element type in the same way as the body shape and facial structures do. Thus a slightly

rancid odour will emanate from a Wood type, a slightly scorched one from a Fire type, etc.

In addition to the constitutional body odour, a person's body odour reflects the patterns he or she is suffering from, and these may not necessarily accord with the patient's Element type. For example, a Wood type may emanate a slightly scorched smell, indicating the presence of a Heart pattern. Indeed, if the body odour contradicts the constitutional Element type, this is a bad sign. In other words, it is worse for a Wood type to have a scorched odour (Heart) than a rancid one.

FIVE-ELEMENT ODOURS

- Rancid: Wood
- Scorched: Fire
- Fragrant/sweetish: Earth
- Rotten: Metal
- Putrid: Water

2. ODOUR OF BODILY SECRETIONS

Diagnosis by smelling is based also on detecting the smell of bodily secretions. Obviously, it is impractical for a practitioner to smell a patient's urine or vaginal discharge. However, I usually ask patients if they have noticed a strong smell, and most people are very aware if any of their bodily secretions are particularly smelly.

The following bodily secretions will be discussed:

- Breath
- Sweat
- Sputum
- Urine and stools
- Vaginal discharge and lochia
- Intestinal gas

a) Breath

The odour emanating from the mouth is closely related to the digestive system. Generally speaking, a strong, unpleasant breath indicates Stomach-Heat or retention of food. A sour-smelling breath indicates retention of food or, in children, Accumulation Disorder. A foul and somewhat pungent breath indicates Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen. A rotten-smelling breath may indicate Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine, which may be due to ulcerative colitis.

BREATH SMELLS

- Strong, foul: Stomach-Heat or retention of food
- Sour: retention of food, Accumulation Disorder (in children)
- Foul, pungent: Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen
- Rotten: Damp-Heat in Large Intestine

b) Sweat

The smell of sweat is often related to Dampness because the fluids forming sweat come from the space between the skin and muscles where Dampness often accumulates. Any strong-smelling sweat often indicates Damp-Heat. Putrid-smelling sweat may indicate a disease of the lungs, liver or kidneys.

c) Sputum

A strong-smelling sputum, often smelling rotten, indicates Heat in the Lungs and usually Phlegm-Heat or Toxic-Heat. A fishy-smelling sputum may also indicate Lung-Heat. Sputum without smell indicates Cold.

d) Urine and stools

Foul-smelling stools always indicate Heat or Damp-Heat in the Intestines, whereas an irregularity of the bowel movement and an absence of smell usually indicates a Cold condition.

As for urine, strong-smelling urine indicates Damp-Heat in the Bladder, whereas absence of smell indicates Cold.

e) Vaginal discharge and lochia

A strong-smelling, leathery smell of vaginal discharge indicates Damp-Heat, whereas a fishy smell indicates Damp-Cold.

Strong-smelling lochia after childbirth may indicate Damp-Heat or Toxic-Heat in the Uterus.

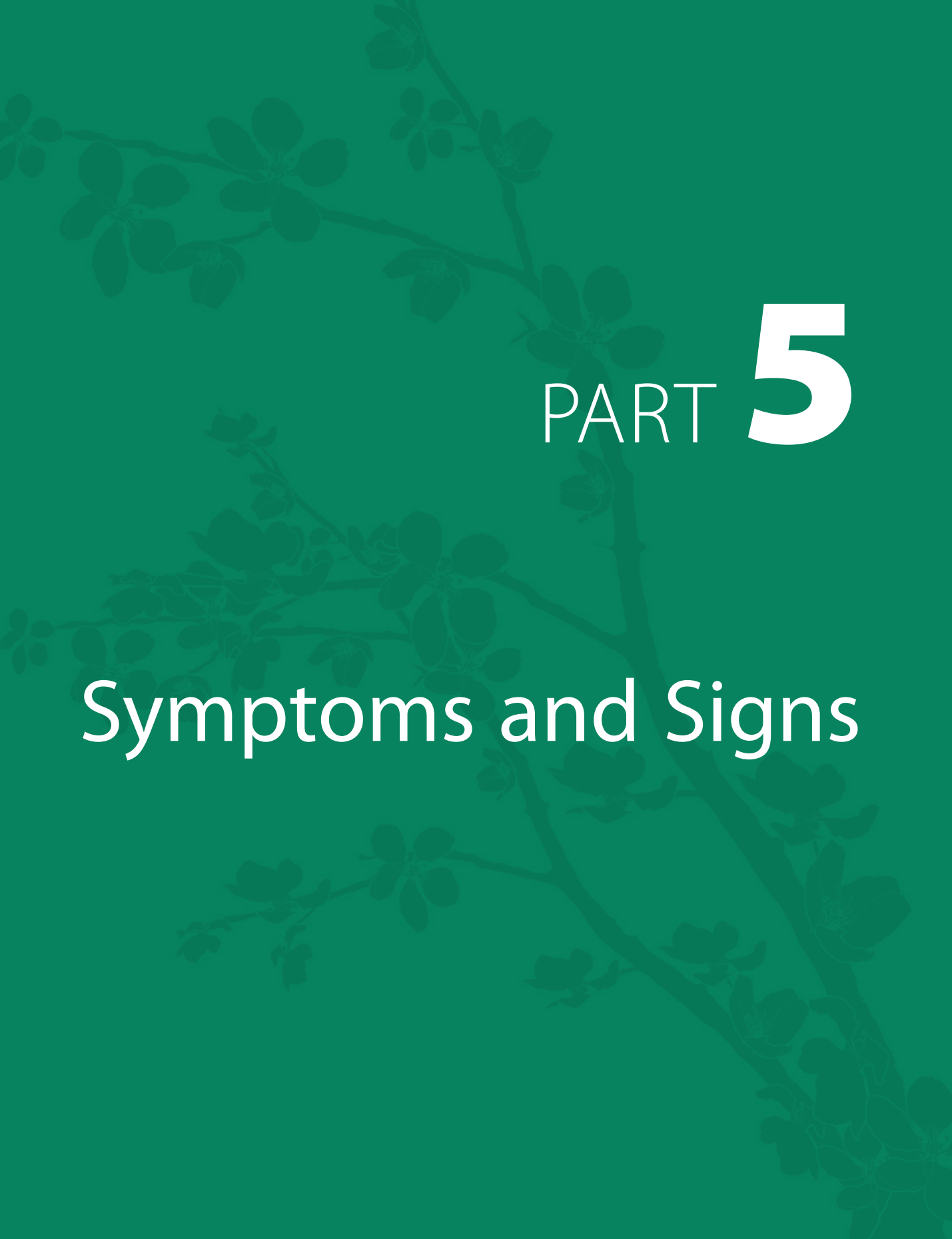
f) Intestinal gas

A strong, foul-smelling intestinal gas indicates Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine. If the gas smells rancid and rotten like rotten eggs, it indicates Toxic-Heat in the Large Intestines. The release of gas without smell usually indicates Spleen-Qi deficiency.

**CHAPTER 54 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The student now should understand:

- That although smelling is not a major diagnostic tool, it reveals the body odour of the patient, which points the way to the patterns of disharmony and the Five-Element type.
- That the pathological pattern of the patient is indicated by the odour of the secretions: the breath, sweat, sputum, urine and stools, vaginal discharge and lochia, and intestinal gas.



PART **5**

Symptoms and Signs

INTRODUCTION

While Part 1 on Observation lists the signs that can be observed, and Part 2 on Interrogation discusses the symptoms that are elicited on interrogation, Part 5 lists both symptoms and signs, by area of the body, without distinction between what is seen on observation and what is elicited from asking the patient. The separation between observation and interrogation is made purely for didactic purposes and does not correspond to clinical reality, where what is seen on observation and what is elicited on interrogation occur simultaneously and may be integrated automatically.

For example, the separation between blood-shot eyes (observation) and eye pain (interrogation) is artificial and unrealistic. If we see a patient with blood-shot eyes, we would immediately ask the person if he or she has eye pain, without waiting to go through all the observation features.

Moreover, the combination of both symptoms and signs for each area corresponds also to how we normally proceed with the patient. For example, if a patient comes in and his or her clinical manifestations are mainly concentrated in one area of the body, we would naturally investigate that area by asking about symptoms and observing any outward sign, without distinction between interrogation and observation; if the patient complains of blurred vision, for instance, we would immediately and automatically observe the eyes to see if they are dry or blood-shot.

To clarify the links between Part 5, on Symptoms and Signs, and Part 1, on Observation, and Part 2, on Interrogation, I have indicated them in each of these parts (e.g., ‘Dizziness’, found in [Chapter 55](#) of Part 5, is also found in [Chapter 34](#) of Part 2).

The symptoms and signs listed in Part 5 are mostly described in terms taken from Chinese books, but with a number of adaptations.

1. I have integrated into the listed symptoms and signs some symptoms (e.g., constant picking at food) and signs (e.g., blushing) that I felt are common in the West but that are missing from the Chinese texts.
2. For many symptoms and signs, I have introduced new patterns that I have not found in the Chinese source texts.
3. I have eliminated certain symptoms and signs or patterns that are seen only in China and added some that are typical of Western patients.

4. Within each pattern, I have added symptoms and signs specific to the symptom or sign discussed.

The symptoms and signs discussed are arranged by body areas, as follows.

Section 1

- Head and face
- Face colour
- Ears
- Nose
- Throat
- Mouth
- Tongue
- Teeth
- Gums
- Lips
- Palate
- Eyes
- Neck
- Shoulders
- Upper back
- Chest
- Limbs
- Arms
- Legs
- Lower back
- Body
- Digestive system and taste
- Thirst and drink
- Abdomen
- Defecation
- Urination
- Anus
- Men’s sexual symptoms
- Sweating
- Skin signs
- Emotional symptoms
- Mental-emotional symptoms
- Mental difficulties
- Sleep
- Feeling of cold, feeling of heat, fever
- Voice

Section 2

- Gynaecological symptoms and signs

Section 3

• Children's symptoms and signs

For each symptom or sign, I list the most common patterns that cause it. I would like to draw the reader's attention to the following points:

- The symptoms/signs are arranged, as much as possible, in order or frequency within each chapter.
- Among the patterns I list first the most common ones, divided into three colour-coded groups of Full, Empty, and Full/Empty. For these patterns, I give the suggested acupuncture points. Below these patterns, I then list less common ones under the heading 'Other Patterns', these without acupuncture treatment.
- There are more symptoms and signs in Part 5 than there are in Part 1 on Observation and Part 2 on Interrogation, but all the symptoms and signs in these two parts are found in the present Part 5.
- The patterns pertaining to each symptom/sign in Part 5 do not necessarily correspond exactly to those in Part 6 (Patterns), for various reasons:
 - Whenever possible, the pattern has been changed to make it more specific to the symptom/sign in which it appears (e.g., the Liver-Blood deficiency pattern for blurred vision will contain more eye or face symptoms).
 - The patterns have also been changed by listing the symptoms and signs that are more closely related to the presenting symptom.
 - There are certain patterns that are peculiar to the symptom/sign discussed and that do not occur in other cases (e.g., Foetus-Toxin Heat in the children's section). This reflects also the fact that, in clinical practice, conditions do not always neatly fall into the standard patterns.
 - The list of all possible manifestations in each pattern has usually been shortened in Part 5 compared with the patterns in Part 6.
- Whenever appropriate, I have indicated with small icons the kind of patient in whom that particular

pattern occurs more frequently. If the symbol for a man or woman is combined with the symbol for the elderly, it means that that pattern is more common in an elderly man or woman, respectively. Of course, these symbols should not be interpreted too rigidly; that is, if there is a symbol of a woman with a particular pattern, that simply means that the pattern is more frequent in women and *not* that that pattern cannot occur in men. The symbolic figures are as follows:

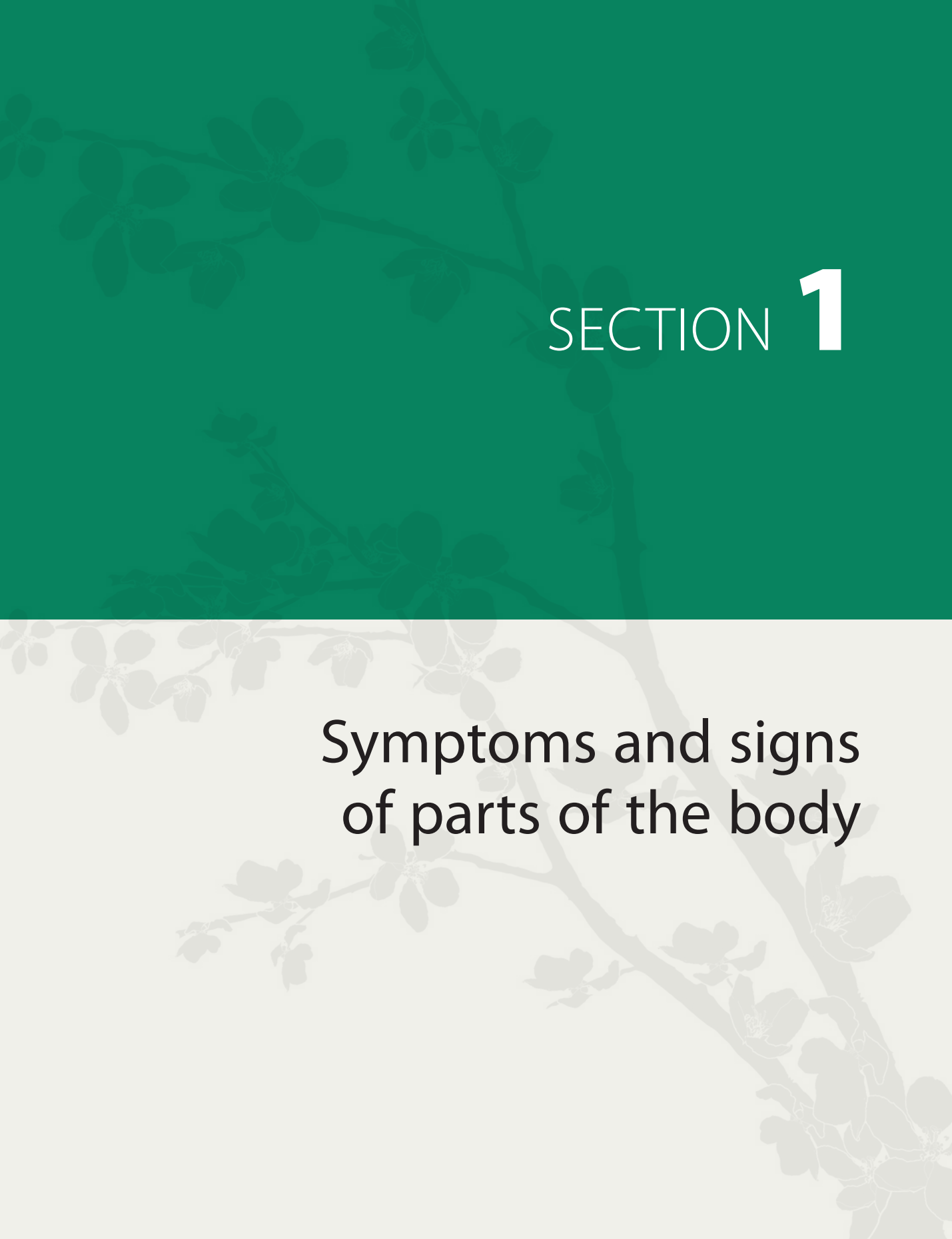
- a man, indicating that that pattern is more common in men
- a woman, indicating that that pattern is more common in women
- a child, indicating that that pattern is more common in children
- an old person, indicating that that pattern is more common in the elderly (man or woman)
- a pregnant woman, indicating that that pattern is more common in pregnant women or women after childbirth

Note: The acupuncture points indicated are not 'formulae' of points; they are merely suggestions, and one can add or remove some points.

The main Chinese source texts used for Part 5 are:

1. Zhang Zhu Sheng: 1995 Great Treatise of Diagnosis by Observation in Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Hua Yi Xue Wang Shen Da Quan*), Shanxi Science Publishing House, Taiyuan.
2. Zhao Jin Duo: 1985 Identification of Patterns and Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Zheng Zhuang Jian Bie Zhen Duan Xue*), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing.
3. Zhu Wen Feng: 1999 Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Zhen Duan Xue*), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing.
4. Zhao Jin Duo: 1991 Differential Diagnosis and Patterns in Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Zheng Hou Jian Bie Zhen Duan Xue*), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing.

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SECTION 1

Symptoms and signs of parts of the body

INTRODUCTION

Part 5 on Symptoms and Signs is divided into three sections as follows:

- Section 1: Symptoms and signs of parts of the body
- Section 2: Gynaecological symptoms and signs
- Section 3: Paediatric symptoms and signs

The first section of Part 5 deals with general symptoms and signs of the whole body. Part 5 lists both symptoms and signs, by area of the body, without distinction between what is seen on observation and what is elicited from asking the patient. The separation between observation and interrogation does not correspond to clinical reality, where what is seen on observation and what is elicited on interrogation occur simultaneously and may be integrated automatically.

For example, the separation between blood-shot eyes (observation) and eye pain (interrogation) is artificial and unrealistic. The collection of both symptoms (elicited by interrogation) and signs (elicited by observation) for each part of the body corresponds to clinical reality.

To give another example, if a patient complains of joint ache (interrogation), the first thing we would naturally do is to look at the joint to see if it is swollen (observation), and we would also palpate the joint (palpation); thus, in this example, observation, interrogation, and palpation all converge into one. It may even be integrated with Hearing and Smelling if we can detect a strong odour emanating from the patient's body.

Moreover, the combination of both symptoms and signs for each area corresponds also to how we normally proceed with the patient. For example, if a patient comes in and his or her clinical manifestations are mainly concentrated in one area of the body, we would naturally investigate that area by asking about symptoms and observing any outward sign, without distinction between interrogation and observation; if the patient complains

of blurred vision, for instance, we would immediately and automatically observe the eyes to see if they are dry or blood-shot.

To clarify the links between Part 5, on Symptoms and Signs, and Part 1, on Observation, and Part 2, on Interrogation, I have indicated them in each of these parts (e.g., 'Dizziness', found in [Chapter 55](#) of Part 5, is also found in [Chapter 34](#) of Part 2).

Section 1 is divided into the following chapters:

- [Chapter 55](#): Head and face
- [Chapter 56](#): Face colour
- [Chapter 57](#): Ears
- [Chapter 58](#): Nose
- [Chapter 59](#): Throat
- [Chapter 60](#): Mouth, tongue, teeth, gums, lips and palate
- [Chapter 61](#): Eyes
- [Chapter 62](#): Neck, shoulders and upper back
- [Chapter 63](#): Chest
- [Chapter 64](#): Limbs
- [Chapter 65](#): Arms
- [Chapter 66](#): Legs
- [Chapter 67](#): Lower back
- [Chapter 68](#): Body
- [Chapter 69](#): Digestive system and taste
- [Chapter 70](#): Thirst and drink
- [Chapter 71](#): Abdomen
- [Chapter 72](#): defecation
- [Chapter 73](#): Urination
- [Chapter 74](#): Anus
- [Chapter 75](#): Men's sexual symptoms
- [Chapter 76](#): Sweating
- [Chapter 77](#): Skin signs
- [Chapter 78](#): Emotional symptoms
- [Chapter 79](#): Mental-emotional symptoms
- [Chapter 80](#): Mental difficulties
- [Chapter 81](#): Sleep
- [Chapter 82](#): Feeling of cold, feeling of heat, fever
- [Chapter 83](#): Voice

Head and Face

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Head

Dizziness
Fainting
Feeling of heaviness of the head
Headache
Feeling of distension of the head
Feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head
Feeling of cold of the head
Feeling of heat of the head
Numbness of the head
Drooping head
Leaning of the head to one side
Tremor of the head
Brain noise
Swelling of the whole head
Ulcers in the mastoid region
Head tilted backwards

Hair and scalp

Premature greying of the hair
Hair falling out
Alopecia
Dry and brittle hair
Greasy hair
Dandruff
Itchy scalp
Dry scalp
Redness and pain of the scalp
Boils on the scalp
Erosion of the scalp
Ulcers on the scalp

Face

Acne
Feeling of heat of the face
Facial pain
Numbness of the face
Oedema of the face
Tic
Deviation of the eye and mouth
Facial paralysis
Papular/macular eruptions
Swelling and redness of the face

Swelling, redness, and pain of the cheeks

Ulcers below the zygomatic arch

Lines on the face

The following head, hair and face symptoms will be discussed:

1. Head

- a) Dizziness
- b) Fainting
- c) Feeling of heaviness of the head
- d) Headache
- e) Feeling of distension of the head
- f) Feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head
- g) Feeling of cold of the head
- h) Feeling of heat of the head
- i) Numbness of the head
- j) Drooping head
- k) Leaning of the head to one side
- l) Tremor of the head
- m) Brain noise
- n) Swelling of the whole head
- o) Ulcers in the mastoid region
- p) Head tilted backwards

2. Hair and scalp

- a) Premature greying of the hair
- b) Hair falling out
- c) Alopecia
- d) Dry and brittle hair
- e) Greasy hair
- f) Dandruff
- g) Itchy scalp
- h) Dry scalp
- i) Redness and pain of the scalp
- j) Boils on the scalp

- k) Erosion of the scalp
- l) Ulcers on the scalp
- 3. Face
 - a) Acne
 - b) Feeling of heat of the face
 - c) Facial pain
 - d) Numbness of the face
 - e) Oedema of the face
 - f) Tic
 - g) Deviation of eye and mouth
 - h) Facial paralysis
 - i) Papular/macular eruptions
 - j) Swelling and redness of the face
 - k) Swelling, redness, and pain of the cheeks
 - l) Ulcers below the zygomatic arch
 - m) Lines on the face

1. HEAD

The following head signs are discussed:

- a) Dizziness
- b) Fainting
- c) Feeling of heaviness of the head
- d) Headache
- e) Feeling of distension of the head
- f) Feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head
- g) Feeling of cold of the head
- h) Feeling of heat of the head
 - i) Numbness of the head
 - j) Drooping head
- k) Leaning of the head to one side
 - l) Tremor of the head
- m) Brain noise
- n) Swelling of the whole head
 - o) Ulcers in the mastoid region
- p) Head tilted backwards

a) Dizziness

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

The dizziness from a Full condition is always more severe than that from an Empty condition.

Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency

Mild dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Kidney deficiency

Dizziness worse after exertion, feeling of emptiness of the head, tinnitus, backache, tiredness, weak knees. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Full

Liver-Yang rising

Dizziness with headache, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-20 Fengchi.

Liver-Wind

Severe dizziness, vertigo, tremors, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse. This is the most severe type of dizziness.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding.

Phlegm obstructing the head

Dizziness, a feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, a feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, blurred vision, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, muzziness of the head, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Du-20 Baihui.

Other patterns

Liver-Fire

Dizziness, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Qi and Blood deficiency of the Spleen and Heart

Mild postural dizziness, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, tiredness, weak muscles, loose stools, poor appetite, scanty periods, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Mild dizziness, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

- In women, Liver-Blood deficiency is the most common cause of dizziness. A Kidney deficiency is also common.
- In the elderly, look for Phlegm as a cause of dizziness.
- When it is clearly due to emotional problems, dizziness is often due to Liver-Yang rising.

b) Fainting

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

Empty

Heart-Blood deficiency

Short, transient episodes of fainting, often without complete loss of consciousness; dull-pale complexion, palpitations, anxiety, insomnia, cold hands, pale lips, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Du-20 Baihui.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Short, transient episodes of fainting, often without complete loss of consciousness, in women often coinciding with the period; dull-pale face, pale lips, cold hands, dizziness, blurred vision, sweating, weak breathing, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, G.B.-20 Fengchi.

Full

Phlegm obstructing the clear orifices

Sudden fainting with unconsciousness or episodes of fainting without complete loss of consciousness, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, vomiting, coarse breathing, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Du-20 Baihui.

Other patterns

Heart-Yin deficiency

Short, transient episodes of fainting, often without complete loss of consciousness, dull-pale complexion with floating-red cheekbones, palpitations, anxiety, insomnia, dry throat at night, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Short, transient episodes of fainting, often without complete loss of consciousness, in women often coinciding with the period, dull-pale face with red cheekbones, dizziness, blurred vision, sweating, weak breathing, dry hair, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Kidney-Yang deficiency and deficiency of the Original Qi

Short, transient episodes of fainting, often without loss of consciousness, mouth open, hands relaxed, weak breathing, pale complexion, sweating, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation with Liver-Qi rebelling upwards to cloud the orifices

Fainting, mouth closed and hands clenched, coarse breathing, cold hands and feet, Wiry-Deep pulse.

Blood-Heat with Liver-Fire blazing upwards to cloud the orifices

Sudden fainting, unconsciousness, clenched teeth, mouth closed, fists clenched, red face, red lips, bloodshot eyes, Red tongue with yellow coating, Wiry-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Retention of Food

Episodes of fainting after overeating, breathlessness, epigastric fullness and distension, foul breath, sour regurgitation, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

c) Feeling of heaviness of the head

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

A feeling of heaviness of the head is always caused by Dampness or Phlegm obstructing the head.

Full

Damp-Phlegm

A feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head and body, dizziness, blurred vision, somnolence, a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-5 Shimen, Ren-9 Shuifen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-8 Touwei, L.I.-4 Hegu, Du-20 Baihui.

Dampness

A feeling of heaviness of the head and body that is worse in the afternoon; a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, a sticky taste, epigastric fullness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, excessive vaginal discharge, sticky tongue coating, Slippery or Soggy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Damp-Heat or Cold-Dampness.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-4 Hegu, Du-20 Baihui.

d) Headache

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

Full

Liver-Yang rising

Distending headache, which can be on the side of the head on the Gall-Bladder channel, on the temples, or behind the eyes; dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse. This is probably the most common type of headache. Liver-Yang rising may arise from Liver-Blood and/or Liver-Yin deficiency or

from Kidney-Yin deficiency, and the clinical manifestations will vary accordingly.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-43 Xiashi, plus local points according to location of headache.

Dampness obstructing the head

Headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, head feeling as if wrapped in cotton wool, a sticky taste, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, epigastric fullness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, excessive vaginal discharge, sticky tongue coating, Slippery or Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-8 Touwei, Du-23 Shangxing, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-7 Lieque, Du-20 Baihui.

Turbid Phlegm obstructing the head

Dull headache with a feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, poor memory and concentration, dizziness, blurred vision, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-8 Touwei, Du-20 Baihui.

Liver-Yang rising with Phlegm obstructing the head

A frequent, almost constant dull headache with a feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, poor memory and concentration, dizziness, blurred vision, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, Swollen tongue with sticky coating. The frequent headache is punctuated by attacks of severe distending headache, which can be on the side of the head on the Gall-Bladder channel, on the temples or behind the eyes; dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger. The pulse is Slippery or Wiry, depending on whether Phlegm or Liver-Yang predominates.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-43 Xiashi, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9

Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-8 Touwei, Du-20 Baihui.

Empty

Blood deficiency

Dull headache on the forehead or the vertex, dizziness, blurred vision, poor memory, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether the Liver or Heart is affected.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guayuan, Du-20 Baihui.

Other patterns

Wind-Phlegm

Pulling headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Liver-Fire

Distending headache, which can be on the side of the head on the Gall-Bladder channel, on the temples, or behind the eyes; red and blood-shot eyes, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Wind

Pulling headache, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Distending headache on the temples and/or forehead, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Blood stasis

Stabbing headache fixed in a small area, purple lips, dark complexion, Purple tongue.

Stomach-Heat

Severe headache on the forehead, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger,

foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Qi deficiency

Dull headache on the forehead that is aggravated by overwork and alleviated by rest and by lying down; uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness especially in the morning, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This is generally due to Stomach-Qi deficiency.

Kidney deficiency

Dull headache with a feeling of emptiness of the head, aggravated by over exertion, dizziness, lower backache, weak knees, tinnitus. The other clinical manifestations depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Retention of Food

Headache on the forehead that is worse after eating; fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting; nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippery pulse. This type of headache is usually seen only in children.

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Occipital headache, stiff neck, aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Headache of the whole head, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Dampness

Frontal headache, feeling of heaviness of the head, aversion to cold, fever, epigastric fullness, body aches, tongue with thin-sticky-white coating, Floating-Slippery pulse. Apart from this pattern identification according to internal organs, it is also important, especially from an acupuncturist's perspective, to differentiate headaches according to the channel involved.

Greater-Yang channels

Occipital headache radiating to the back of the neck and top of the back.

Acupuncture

S.I.-3 Houxi, BL-62 Shenmai.

Bright-Yang channels

Headache on the forehead.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Lesser-Yang channels

Headaches on the temples, the sides of the head and neck along the Gall-Bladder channel and Triple Burner channel.

Acupuncture

T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-41 Zulinqi.

Greater-Yin channels

Frontal headache.

Acupuncture

SP-3 Taibai, LU-7 Lieque.

Lesser-Yin channels

Headache felt inside the head or on the occiput, dull in character.

Acupuncture

KI-4 Dazhong, HE-5 Tongli.

Terminal-Yin channels

Headache on the vertex.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, P-6 Neiguan.



CLINICAL NOTE

- In my experience, the combination of Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm is the most common cause of chronic headaches in adults.
- In women, Liver-Yang rising (causing chronic headaches) usually arises from Liver-Blood deficiency.

e) Feeling of distension of the head

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

Full

Liver-Yang rising

Feeling of distension of the head, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outburst of anger, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-43 Xiashi.

Other patterns

Liver-Fire

Feeling of distension of the head, eye ache, blood-shot eyes, headaches, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Acute feeling of distension of the head, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

f) Feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

Full

Phlegm

Severe muzziness of the head, dizziness, feeling of heaviness of the head, blurred vision, excessive production of ear wax, stuffed nose, dull frontal headache, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-4 Hegu, Du-20 Baihui.

Dampness

Muzziness of the head, feeling of heaviness of the head, chronic sinusitis, stuffed nose, sticky-nasal discharge, dull-frontal headache as if the head were wrapped in cotton wool, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, a feeling of oppression of the chest, excessive vaginal discharge, sticky tongue coating, Slippery or Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-7 Lieque, ST-44 Neiting, Du-20 Baihui.



CLINICAL NOTE

Phlegm is by far the most common cause of a feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head.

g) Feeling of cold of the head

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

This includes an actual feeling of cold of the head, but also a propensity to wearing a hat and a strong dislike of wind.

Empty

Governing Vessel Empty and Cold

Feeling of cold of the head and back, cold limbs, feeling cold, sore back, cold feet, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, pale complexion, Floating but Weak on all three positions on the left.

Acupuncture

S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-20 Baihui with direct moxa.

Other patterns

Cold in the Liver Channel

Feeling of cold of the head, vertical headache, bluish complexion, cold hands and feet, Deep-Tight pulse.

h) Feeling of heat of the head

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

Full

Liver-Fire

Feeling of heat of the head, red face, red and blood-shot eyes, eye ache, headaches, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter

taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Stomach-Heat

Feeling of heat of the head, especially after eating or, in children, during sleep; thirst, epigastric pain, tongue with yellow coating, Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Empty

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Feeling of heat of the head, especially in the evening; dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Yin Fire

Feeling of heat of the head but cold feet, or feeling cold in general; tiredness, mouth ulcers, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, Du-20 Baihui, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Empty Heat from Blood deficiency

Feeling of heat of the head, especially in the afternoon; tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. Empty Heat from Blood deficiency occurs only in women.

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, L.I.-4 Hegu, HE-5 Tongli.

i) Numbness of the head

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

Empty**Liver-Blood deficiency**

Numbness of the skin of the head, especially on the vertex, dull headache, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Du-20 Baihui.

Full**Damp-Phlegm**

Numbness of the skin of the head, especially on the forehead, a feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, a feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, blurred vision, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, muzziness of the head, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Du-20 Baihui, ST-8 Touwei.

Other patterns**Liver-Wind**

Unilateral numbness of the head, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

j) Drooping head**Empty****Emptiness of the Sea of Marrow**

Head drooping, dizziness, tinnitus, deafness, sore back, poor memory, weak knees, difficulty in walking. This is usually, but not always, accompanied by Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, KI-13 Qixue, KI-14 Siman.

Other patterns**Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency**

Head drooping, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

k) Leaning of the head to one side

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Empty**Emptiness of the Sea of Marrow**

Leaning of the head to one side, dizziness, tinnitus, deafness, sore back, poor memory, weak knees, difficulty in walking. This is usually, but not always, accompanied by Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, KI-13 Qixue, KI-14 Siman, Du-16 Fengfu.

Other patterns**Spleen-Qi sinking**

Leaning of the head to one side, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, depression, tendency to obesity, a bearing-down sensation in the abdomen, prolapse of stomach, uterus, anus or bladder, frequency and urgency of urination, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

l) Tremor of the head

Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 4 and 5](#)

Full**Liver-Wind**

Tremor of the head, vertigo, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding.

Empty**Empty-Wind from Blood deficiency**

Slight tremor of the head, slight tremor of the hand, facial tic, dizziness, poor memory, blurred vision, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding, LIV-8

Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Empty-Wind from Yin deficiency

Slight tremor of the head, slight tremor of the hand, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding, LIV-8 Ququan, KI-3 Taixi, KI-10 Yingu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

m) Brain noise

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

'Brain noise' is similar to the sound of tinnitus in the ears, but it is experienced in the centre of the head. The Chinese name for it is *nao ting*, which means 'brain tinnitus'; its old name was *lei tou feng*, which means 'thunder head wind'.

Empty

Emptiness of the Sea of Marrow

Brain noise like tinnitus, dizziness, tinnitus, brain noise, poor memory, deafness, feeling of emptiness of the head, blurred vision.

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, KI-13 Qixue, KI-14 Siman, Du-16 Fengfu.

Other patterns

Deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Spleen and Heart

Brain noise like tinnitus, poor memory, dizziness, insomnia, palpitations, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Phlegm-Heat rising

Brain noise like tinnitus, a feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, headache, dizziness, blurred vision, nausea, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Red-Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Brain noise like tinnitus, tense neck muscles, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness,

feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse. Stagnant Liver-Qi impairs the ascending and descending of Qi; clear Qi cannot rise, and turbid Qi cannot descend, so turbidity accumulates in the head.

n) Swelling of the whole head

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

'Big Head Warm Disease' (invasion of Toxic Heat in the head)

Swelling of the head and face, swollen glands, swelling of the parotid gland, swollen tonsils, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

o) Ulcers in the mastoid region

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Full

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder channel

Ulcers in the mastoid region, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-43 Xiashi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Other patterns

Liver-Fire

Ulcers in the mastoid region, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

p) Head tilted backwards

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Internal Wind in acute febrile diseases

Head tilted backwards with eyes rolled up, opisthotonos, fever at night, convulsions, macular rash, Red tongue without coating, Fine and Wiry pulse.

2. HAIR AND SCALP

The following hair signs will be discussed:

- a) Premature greying of the hair
- b) Hair falling out
- c) Alopecia
- d) Dry and brittle hair
- e) Greasy hair
- f) Dandruff
- g) Itchy scalp
- h) Dry scalp
- i) Redness and pain of the scalp
- j) Boils on the scalp
- k) Erosion of the scalp
- l) Ulcers on the scalp

a) Premature graying of the hair

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Empty

Liver and Kidney deficiency

Premature greying of the hair over the whole head, balding, dizziness, tinnitus, blurred vision, backache, decreased libido; other clinical manifestations depend on whether there is Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Premature greying of the hair, balding, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LI-11 Quchi.

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Premature greying of the hair, poor bone development in children, softening of bones in adults, deafness,

weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, falling hair or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower backache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse is Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency, Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-52 Zhishi, KI-13 Qixue.

Other patterns

Liver-Blood deficiency

Premature greying of the hair, especially on the vertex, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Premature greying of the hair, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Liver- and Heart-Fire

Hair turning white suddenly after a shock or a very intense emotional upset, such as anger; headaches, blood-shot eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, red face, thirst, bitter taste, palpitations, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, Red tongue with redder sides and tip and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Premature greying of the hair in patches that may appear in a relatively short time, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse. This pattern is due to worry, pensiveness, or anger, which causes Qi stagnation; this turns into Heat, which in turn damages Yin.

b) Hair falling out

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

This refers to hair falling out gradually and uniformly (as opposed to in clumps).

Empty

Kidney deficiency

Gradual loss of hair that may improve during pregnancy, dizziness, tinnitus, backache, tiredness. Other symptoms and signs, including pulse and tongue, depend on whether there is a deficiency of Kidney-Yin, Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Essence deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Gradual loss of hair, dull headache, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Other patterns

Blood Heat from Liver-Fire

Gradual loss of hair, especially on the vertex, red face, blood-shot eyes, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Alopecia

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Alopecia refers to the loss of hair falling out in clumps.

Empty

Empty Liver-Wind from Blood deficiency

Sudden loss of hair in clumps, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, Du-19 Houding, LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Full

Full Liver-Wind

Sudden loss of hair in clumps, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding.

Other patterns

Blood Heat from Liver-Fire

Hair falling out in clumps, dry hair, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Blood stasis

Hair falling out in clumps, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

As a rule of thumb, hair falls gradually if it is due to a deficiency (of Liver-Blood or Kidneys), whereas it falls out in clumps if it is due to a Fullness (often internal Wind).

d) Dry and brittle hair

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency

Dry hair without lustre, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dry hair without lustre, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, dry

mouth and throat at night, lower backache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, lassitude, depression, slight anxiety, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

Other patterns

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Thin and brittle hair, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Thin and brittle hair, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Loss of blood

Dry and lifeless hair without lustre, dry skin, pale complexion, menorrhagia, Pale and dry tongue, Hollow pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

In women, I always observe the hair early on during the consultation to check the state of Liver-Blood.

e) Greasy hair

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Full

Dampness

Greasy hair, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, a feeling of oppression of the chest, excessive vaginal discharge, sticky tongue coating, Slippery or Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Damp-Heat

Greasy hair, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, a feeling of heat, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Phlegm

Greasy hair, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

f) Dandruff

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Empty

Liver-Blood deficient and dry

Dandruff, dry hair, dry skin, dry eyes, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai.

Other patterns

Liver-Blood deficiency with Liver-Wind

Dandruff, dry hair, dry skin, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Liver-Fire

Dandruff, feeling of heat of the head, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Liver

Dandruff, greasy hair, yellow eyes, excessive ear wax production, fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium, bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, excessive vaginal discharge and itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination with dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Toxic Heat

Dandruff, scalp skin infections, boils on the head, feeling of heat of the head, red eyes, thirst, Red tongue with red points and thick-dry-yellow coating, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat and Dryness

Dandruff with acute onset, dry cough, aversion to cold, fever, dry throat, tickly throat, dry nose, discomfort of the chest, thin-dry-white coating, Floating pulse.

g) Itchy scalp

Part 1 Interrogation, [Chapter 34](#)

Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency 

Itchy scalp, dandruff, dry scalp and hair, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai.

Empty/Full

Liver-Blood deficiency with Liver-Wind

Itchy scalp, dandruff, dry scalp and hair, dry skin, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai, G.B.-20 Fengchi, LIV-3 Taichong, Du-16 Fengfu, Du-19 Houding.

Other patterns

Liver-Yin deficiency

Itchy scalp, dry scalp and hair, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, blurred vision, floaters in eyes, dry eyes, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but with red cheek-bones, withered and brittle nails, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Liver-Fire

Itchy scalp, feeling of heat of the head, dry scalp, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Itchy scalp, skin eruptions on the scalp, psoriasis of the scalp, fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium, bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

h) Dry scalp

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Empty

Liver-Yin deficiency

Dry scalp, dry hair, dandruff, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, withered and brittle nails, normal colour tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dry scalp, dry hair, dandruff, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night,

lower backache, dry stools, dark-scanty urine, normal coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

i) Redness and pain of the scalp

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Acute redness and pain of the scalp, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Fire

Redness and pain of the scalp, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

j) Boils on the scalp

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Full

Liver-Fire

Chronic boils on the scalp, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, Du-19 Houding.

Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Chronic boils on the scalp, fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium, bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Other patterns

Toxic Heat in the head

Acute boils on the scalp, redness, pain and swelling of the scalp, headache, swollen glands, red and swollen tonsils, aversion to cold, fever, thirst, tongue that is Red on the front with red points and a thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

k) Erosion of the scalp

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Erosion of the scalp with itching and oozing of fluid, fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium, bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

l) Ulcers on the scalp

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Liver-Fire

Chronic ulcers on the scalp, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Chronic ulcers on the scalp, fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium, bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Governing Vessel

Ulcers on the crown of the head, feeling of heat in the head, redness of the scalp, headache, insomnia,

dark-scanty urine, Red tongue with yellow coating, Floating-Rapid pulse on all three positions on the left.

3. FACE

The following face signs are discussed:

- a) Acne
- b) Feeling of heat of the face
- c) Facial pain
- d) Numbness of the face
- e) Oedema of the face
- f) Tic
- g) Deviation of the eye and mouth
- h) Facial paralysis
- i) Papular/macular eruptions
- j) Swelling and redness of the face
- k) Swelling, redness and pain of the cheeks
- l) Ulcers below the zygomatic arch
- m) Lines on the face

a) Acne

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 77](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Full

Damp-Heat in the skin

Facial acne with red, papular eruptions, greasy skin, puffy face, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse. This is the most common pattern causing acne in young people.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Toxic Heat in the skin

Facial acne with large, red, pustular eruptions that are painful; feeling of heat, red face, red eyes, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, LIV-2 Xingjian.

Toxic Heat with Blood stasis in the skin

Facial acne with large, dark red or purple, pustular eruptions that are painful, feeling of heat, dark face, red eyes, Reddish-Purple tongue with red points and

thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Overflowing-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, LIV-2 Xingjian, P-6 Neiguan, SP-10 Xuehai, BL-17 Geshu.

Heat in the Lungs and Stomach

Facial acne with small, red, papular eruptions on the face, chest and upper back; dry skin, blackheads, red face, feeling of heat, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-10 Yuji, LU-5 Chize.

Empty/Full

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Chronic facial acne with pale-red, papular, or vesicular eruptions that take a long time to come to a head; greasy skin, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-20 Pishu, ST-36 Zusanli.

Other patterns

Damp-Phlegm in the skin

Facial acne with large, pale, vesicular eruptions, greasy skin, puffy face, greasy hair, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Damp-Phlegm with Blood stasis in the skin

Facial acne with large, dark, purple, papular eruptions, dark complexion, puffy face, dry skin if Blood stasis predominates, greasy skin if Damp-Phlegm predominates, Purple and Swollen tongue, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

Disharmony of Penetrating and Directing Vessels

Facial acne that starts with puberty, especially on the chin; greasy skin, papular eruptions that are aggravated before the period in girls.

Rather than being a separate pattern causing acne, a disharmony of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels is the condition underlying the development of acne at

puberty and one that continues to be an underlying condition when the acne persists for several years, especially in women.



CLINICAL NOTE

When treating acne, I always harmonize the Directing and Penetrating Vessel, irrespective of the pattern, in order to balance the hormone levels

b) Feeling of heat of the face

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

A feeling of heat of the face includes menopausal hot flushes.

Full

Liver-Yang rising

A feeling of heat of the face, red face, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-20 Fengchi, G.B.-43 Xiapi.

Liver-Fire

A feeling of heat of the face and head, worse when anxious or upset; red face, red eyes, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Heart-Fire

Feeling of heat of the face, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Lung-Heat

Feeling of heat of the face, redness of the right cheek, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache,

flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-10 Yuji, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Stomach-Heat

A feeling of heat of the face, worse after eating; burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-21 Liangmen.

Empty/Full

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Feeling of heat of the face in the afternoon and evening, malar flush, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, thirst with desire to sip fluids, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-6 Yinxi, HE-8 Shaofu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-14 Juque.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Feeling of heat of the face in the afternoon or evening, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Feeling of heat of the face in the afternoon and evening, malar flush, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum that could be blood-tinged; dry mouth and throat at night, weak and/or hoarse voice, night-sweating,

tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body or thin chest, insomnia, anxiety, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid tongue.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-10 Yuji, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

A feeling of heat of the face in the afternoon and evening, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, dry mouth and throat especially in the afternoon, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, dry stools, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Other patterns

Damp-Heat in the Spleen

A feeling of heat of the face, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of fullness of the epigastrium, epigastric or abdominal pain, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness of the body, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Heat

A feeling of heat of the face, red and dry lips, red tip of the nose, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

A feeling of heat of the face in the afternoon and evening, poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth and lips, dry stools, thin body, sallow complexion with red tip of the nose, night-sweating, malar flush, a feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating and

transversal cracks on the sides, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Yin-Fire

A feeling of heat of the face but cold limbs, slightly red face or pale face with a floating red colour on the cheeks, intermittent sore throat, dry mouth, dry lips, mouth ulcers, exhaustion, poor appetite, poor digestion, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Weak or Overflowing-Empty pulse.

Yin-Fire is a pathological Minister Fire that arises when the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*) becomes depleted from overwork. Because the Minister of Fire and the Original Qi reside in the same place, the pathological Minister Fire 'robs' the Original Qi and rises to the head. This pattern is treated by tonifying the Original Qi and lightly clearing Heat; the representative prescription is Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang ('Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction').



CLINICAL NOTE

In women, a feeling of heat of the face by no means always indicates Heat. In women, a feeling of heat of the face contradicting other symptoms and signs is very common. In particular, it may be due to:

- a simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang
- Empty Heat from Blood deficiency
- Yin Fire

c) Facial pain

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 35

Facial pain, such as in trigeminal neuralgia, is often due to invasion of Wind in the channels of the face. This is an invasion of Wind purely in the channels of the face, and it is not accompanied by the symptoms of invasion of Wind in the Lung Defensive-Qi system (as in the common cold and influenza). The pattern of Wind in the channels causing facial pain may be associated with any of the other patterns listed; for example, the association of invasion of Wind in the channels of the face with Yin deficiency is a common cause of facial pain, especially in the elderly.

Full

Liver-Fire

Burning facial pain that comes and goes according to emotional moods, pain aggravated by exposure to heat, red face, blood-shot eyes, headache, dizziness, tinnitus,

irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Damp-Heat

Severe pain in the cheeks and forehead accompanied by a sticky-yellow or greenish nasal discharge, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, a feeling of heat, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

Blood stasis

Stabbing facial pain, dark complexion, headache, purple lips, dark rings under the eyes, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. This is Blood stasis affecting the channels of the face, which may occur against a background of Heart- or Liver-Blood deficiency.

Acupuncture

Chong Mai (SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan), LIV-3 Taichong, SP-10 Xuehai, BL-17 Geshu, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Other patterns

Invasion of Wind-Cold in the channels

Facial pain in repeated bouts; spastic, unbearable pain; face becomes ashen-pale during a bout of pain, aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by heat, Pale tongue, Tight pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat in the channels

Facial pain with a burning sensation in repeated bouts; stabbing, unbearable pain; pain in nose and lips, touching the face may suddenly provoke the pain, the pain is more often along the central axis of the face rather than on the right and left sides, face becomes red during a bout of pain, sweating, pain alleviated by exposure to cold and aggravated by exposure to heat, feeling of heat, thirst, yellow tongue coating, Rapid pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Chronic, dull facial pain that is aggravated by overexertion and alleviated by rest, pale face, poor appetite, loose

stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Facial pain, malar flush, dry mouth with no desire to drink, a feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat and internal Wind

Facial pain aggravated by exposure to wind, malar flush, dry mouth with no desire to drink, a feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, vertigo, facial tics, tremor, Stiff, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty, Rapid and slightly Wiry pulse.

Phlegm-Heat

Facial pain, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, a feeling of heat, red face, swelling of the face, dark rings under the eyes, greasy skin, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, expectoration of yellow sputum, dizziness, nausea, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Yin deficiency with Phlegm-Heat

Facial pain, malar flush, dry mouth with no desire to drink, a feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, a feeling of heat, red face, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, swelling of the face, greasy skin, dizziness, nausea, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Red, Swollen tongue with coating, Floating-Empty or Fine and slightly Slippery pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

In the elderly with facial pain (often trigeminal neuralgia), Yin deficiency is nearly always the background for an invasion of Wind.

d) Numbness of the face

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Empty

Blood deficiency

Mild numbness of the face, dull pale complexion, dull headache, blurred vision, dizziness, Pale tongue, Choppy

or Fine pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organs involved (which may be Liver or Heart).

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, HE-7 Shenmen, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Full

Liver-Wind

Unilateral numbness of the face, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Wind-Phlegm

Numbness of the face, deviation of the mouth, slurred speech, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Other patterns

Stomach-Fire

Numbness of the face, bleeding gums, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, sour regurgitation, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind

Numbness of the face with a sudden onset and short duration, deviation of eye and mouth, Floating pulse.

e) Oedema of the face

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Empty

Lung-Qi deficiency

Oedema of the face and hands, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike to speak, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

Spleen-Yang deficiency

Oedema of the face, abdomen, and legs; poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, feeling cold, cold limbs, oedema. Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-20 Pishu, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

Other patterns

Wind-Water invading the Lungs

Oedema of the face and hands with sudden onset, bright-shiny complexion, scanty and pale urination, aversion to wind, fever, cough, slight breathlessness, sticky-white tongue coating, Floating-Slippery pulse.

f) Tic

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#)

‘Tic’ indicates an involuntary, recurrent twitching of facial muscles, usually involving the eyes and/or mouth.

Full

Liver-Wind

Severe eye tic, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Empty/Full***Liver-Blood deficiency leading to Liver-Wind***

Occasional facial tic, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Other patterns***Liver-Wind and Phlegm***

Facial tic, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippy pulse. This condition is more common in old people.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Eye tic, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

External Invasion of Wind-Cold in the channels of the face

Short-lasting tic with sudden onset, stiff neck, occipital headache, Floating-Tight pulse.

g) Deviation of the eye and mouth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 4 and 5](#)

Full***Liver-Wind***

Deviation of eye and mouth, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse. This corresponds to Wind-stroke.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai, Du-19 Houding, L.I.-4 Hegu, plus local points for facial paralysis.¹

External invasion of Wind-Cold in the channels of the face

Sudden deviation of mouth and eye, incomplete closure of the eye, inability to raise eyebrow. This corresponds to facial paralysis (Bell's palsy) and it is due to an invasion of Wind-Cold, not in the Lung's Defensive-Qi portion (as in a common cold and influenza), but in the channels of the face.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-7 Lieque, T.B.-5 Waiguan, plus local points for facial paralysis.²

Other patterns***Liver-Wind and Phlegm***

Deviation of eye and mouth, hypertension, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, a feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of sputum, Deviated or Stiff and Swollen tongue with a sticky coating, Wiry-Slippy pulse. This condition is more common in old people.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Intermittent deviation of eye and mouth, depending on emotional moods, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Slight deviation of eye and mouth, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Toxic Heat in the channels of the face

Deviation of mouth only, thirst, bitter taste, swelling and pain of the face, toothache, headache, red eyes, Red tongue with red points with thick, sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

h) Facial paralysis

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#)

Full***External invasion of Wind-Cold in the channels of the face***

Facial paralysis with a sudden onset, incomplete closure of the eye, inability to raise eyebrow. This corresponds

to facial paralysis (Bell's palsy), and it is due to an invasion of Wind-Cold, not in the Lung's Defensive-Qi portion (as in a common cold and influenza), but in the channels of the face.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-7 Lieque, T.B.-5 Waiguan, plus local points for facial paralysis, plus local points for facial paralysis.³

i) Papular/macular eruptions

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Lung-Heat

Papular eruptions on the face and nose, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Blood-Heat

Macular eruptions on the face, red face, feeling of heat of the head, thirst, insomnia, agitation, heavy periods, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

j) Swelling and redness of the face

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Invasion of Toxic Heat

Acute swelling and redness of the face, swollen tonsils, swollen glands, swelling of the parotid gland, aversion to cold, fever, headache, tongue Red in the front with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

k) Swelling, redness, and pain of the cheeks

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Toxic Heat in the face

Swelling, redness, and pain of the cheeks; thirst, bitter taste, toothache, headache, red eyes, Red tongue with

red points with thick, sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

l) Ulcers below the zygomatic arch

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Toxic Heat in the Stomach

Ulcers below the zygomatic arch, swelling and redness of the cheeks, red and swollen tonsils, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a thick-sticky-yellow coating and red points, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

m) Lines on the face

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

Blood deficiency

Lines on the face, dry skin of the face, dry scalp and hair, dry eyes, floaters, blurred vision, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, Pale and Thin tongue, Fine or Choppy pulse.

Heat with dryness

Lines on the face, dry skin of the face, dry scalp and hair, red face, dry mouth, dry eyes, thirst, feeling of heat, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

END NOTES

1. Maciocia G: *The practice of Chinese medicine*, Churchill Livingstone, 2012, Edinburgh, p. 1202.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

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Face Colour

CHAPTER CONTENTS

White/pale*Empty**Full**Other patterns***Yellow***Full**Empty**Other patterns***Red***Full**Empty/Full**Other patterns***Bluish/greenish***Full**Empty**Other patterns***Purple***Full***Dark***Empty**Full**Other patterns***Sallow***Empty**Full**Empty/Full**Other patterns***Blushing***Full**Empty/Full**Other patterns*

7. Sallow

8. Blushing

1. WHITE/PALEPart 1 Observation, [Chapter 3](#)**a) Empty****Yang deficiency**

Bright-pale complexion, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, slight shortness of breath, spontaneous sweating, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Weak pulse. Yang deficiency of any organ, especially Stomach, Spleen, Kidneys, Lungs and Heart, may cause a bright-pale complexion.

Acupuncture

ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, KI-7 Fuliu, BL-23 Shenshu (moxa).

Blood deficiency

Dull-pale complexion, blurred vision, poor memory, dizziness, scanty periods, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. Blood deficiency of the Heart, Spleen, or Liver may cause a dull-pale complexion.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jique, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-8 Ququan, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

b) Full**Full Cold**

Greyish-pale complexion, abdominal pain, epigastric pain, cold limbs; pain alleviated by exposure to heat and by drinking warm drinks and aggravated by exposure to cold and by drinking cold drinks; thick-white tongue

The following face colours are discussed:

1. White/pale
2. Yellow
3. Red
4. Bluish/greenish
5. Purple
6. Dark

coating, Tight pulse. This is Full-Internal cold, which may affect the Stomach, Spleen, Liver channel, and Intestines.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-23 Shenshu, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-6 Qihai (moxa).

c) Other patterns

Qi deficiency

Slightly pale face, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, slight shortness of breath, Empty pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be especially Lungs, Spleen, or Heart.

Collapse of Yang

Greyish-pale complexion, sweating on the forehead resembling oil beads, chilliness, cold limbs, weak breathing, absence of thirst, profuse-pale urination or incontinence of urine, loose stools, incontinence of faeces, mental confusion or unconsciousness, Pale-Short and wet tongue, Deep-Minute pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Greyish-pale complexion, aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Heat stagnating in the Interior (True Heat – False Cold)

Greyish-pale complexion, dark face, bright eyes with lustre, red-dry lips, irritability, strong body, noisy breathing, loud voice, thirst with desire to drink cold fluids, scanty-dark urine, constipation, burning sensation in anus, limbs cold, chest hot, aversion to heat, mental restlessness, thirst, dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Do not be surprised if, in women, a pale face has some redness on the cheeks. This may be due to:

- Simultaneous Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang deficiency
- Empty Heat from Blood deficiency
- Yin-Fire

2. YELLOW

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 3](#)

a) Full

Dampness

Yellow complexion (which may be bright if Dampness is combined with Heat), a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, a feeling of oppression of the chest, excessive vaginal discharge, sticky tongue coating, Slippery or Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Chronic Damp-Heat

Ash-like yellow complexion, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Empty

Chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency

Dull-yellow, greyish-yellow complexion, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu.

c) Other patterns

Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull-yellow or greyish-yellow complexion, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with stagnation of Liver-Qi

Greyish-yellow complexion, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, pulse Weak on the right and Wiry on the left.

Damp-Heat with Blood stasis

Bluish-yellow complexion, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, sticky taste, purple lips and nails, Reddish-purple tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Heat

Dry-yellow complexion, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Thin, dry-yellow complexion, malar flush, poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth and lips, dry stools, thin body, a feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Heat

Dry-yellow complexion, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Blood stasis

Very dull and sallow yellow complexion, mental restlessness, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Firm pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Floating, reddish-yellow complexion, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Dampness

Floating-yellow complexion, aversion to cold, fever, nausea, feeling of heaviness, headache, body aches, slight sweating, Floating-Slippery pulse.

3. RED

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 3](#)

a) Full

Full Heat

Bright-red face, feeling of heat, thirst, mental restlessness, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Heat of any organ may cause a red face, but especially of the Heart, Lungs, Liver and Stomach.

Acupuncture

- Heart: HE-Shaofu
- Liver: LIV-2 Xingjian
- Stomach: ST-44 Neiting
- Lungs: LU-10 Yuji

Liver-Yang rising

Slightly red face, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-43 Xiashi.

Damp-Heat

Red face, swollen face, greasy skin, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling of heat, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Empty/Full

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, mental restlessness, 5-palm heat, Red tongue

without coating, Rapid and Floating-Empty pulse. This may be Empty Heat of any organ but especially of the Stomach, Heart, Lungs, Kidneys, Spleen, and Liver.

Acupuncture

SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi to nourish Yin. Also:

- Heart: HE-6 Yinxi
- Liver: LIV-2 Xingjian
- Lungs: LU-10 Yuji
- Stomach: ST-44 Neiting
- Spleen: SP-2 Dadu
- Kidneys: KI-2 Rangju

c) Other patterns

Blood deficiency with Empty Heat

Floating red cheek bones, dull-pale complexion, blurred vision, dizziness, scanty periods, amenorrhoea, insomnia, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. Empty Heat deriving from Blood deficiency is usually seen only in women, and although it may cause the cheek bones to become red, it is not usually associated with other Heat symptoms, such as thirst or a feeling of heat.

Yin-Fire

Slightly red face or pale face with a floating red colour on the cheeks, intermittent and recurrent feeling of heat in the face but cold limbs, intermittent sore throat, dry mouth, dry lips, mouth ulcers, exhaustion, poor appetite, poor digestion, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Weak or Overflowing-Empty pulse.

Yin-Fire is a pathological Minister Fire that arises when the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*) becomes depleted from overwork. Because the Minister of Fire and the Original Qi reside in the same place, the pathological Minister Fire 'robs' the Original Qi and rises to the head. This pattern is treated by tonifying the Original Qi and lightly clearing Heat and the representative prescription is Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang ('Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction').

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Red face, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Deficient Yang floating

Malar flush, feeling of heat, likes to remove clothes, thirst with desire to drink warm liquids, slight shortness of breath, cold sweating, cold limbs, pale urine, pale lips, Pale tongue, Weak pulse. This condition is quite rare; it results when the Yang is so weak that what little Yang there is floats upwards.

4. BLUISH/GREENISH

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 3](#)

'Bluish/greenish' is a translation of the Chinese word *qing*, which, unfortunately, may mean both 'green' and 'blue', leading to difficulties in translating this term.

a) Full

Full Cold

Bright-bluish face, abdominal pain, epigastric pain, facial pain, pain alleviated by exposure to heat and aggravated by exposure to cold, cold limbs, white tongue coating, Tight pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-23 Shenshu, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-6 Qihai (moxa).

Liver-Qi stagnation

Very slightly greenish complexion, especially around the mouth, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, P-6 Neiguan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan.

b) Empty

Heart- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dull-bluish face, ashen face, greenish lips, palpitations, shortness of breath, discomfort of the chest, cold limbs, oedema, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, pale-abundant urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, BL-15 Xinshu, KI-7 Fuli, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu (moxa).

Lung- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dull-greenish-purplish face, breathlessness that is worse on exertion, weak voice, cold limbs, sweating, pale-frequent urination, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, KI-7 Fuliu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu (moxa).

c) Other patterns

Chronic pain

Dull-greenish face, abdominal pain, epigastric pain, facial pain, painful periods. A chronic pain from any origin or organ may cause the face to become dull-greenish.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Very slightly greenish complexion, especially around the mouth, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Wind

Greenish face, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

5. PURPLE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 3](#)

a) Full

Blood stasis from Cold

Bluish-purple face, chest pain, palpitations, abdominal pain, Bluish-Purple tongue, Tight pulse. Other manifestation depend on the organ involved, which may be Heart, Liver, Lungs, or Intestines.

Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai (moxa).

Blood stasis from Heat

Reddish-purple face, feeling of heat, chest pain, abdominal pain, Reddish-Purple tongue, Wiry pulse. This is

usually due to Liver-Blood stasis associated with Blood Heat

Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai.

6. DARK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 3](#)

A 'dark' complexion is a mixture of a greyish-purplish colour, usually without 'spirit', that is dull in appearance; in extreme cases, it can be very dark, almost black.

a) Empty

Severe Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dark complexion, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, depression, exhaustion, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu. Moxa.

b) Full

Severe Blood stasis

Dark complexion, purple nails, dry skin, purple lips, abdominal or chest pain, painful periods, Purple tongue, Choppy pulse.

Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai.

c) Other patterns

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Dark complexion, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, poor memory, loose teeth, premature greying of hair, infertility, sterility, Leather pulse.

7. SALLOW

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 3](#)

A 'sallow' complexion indicates a pale-yellowish colour of the skin that is dull and without lustre.

a) Empty

Chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency

Sallow complexion, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu.

b) Full

Blood deficiency

Dull-sallow complexion, dizziness, blurred vision, insomnia, scanty periods, numbness or tingling of limbs, tiredness, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be Liver, Heart, or Spleen.

Acupuncture

- Liver: LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.
- Heart: HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.
- Spleen: Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu.

c) Empty/Full

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Sallow complexion, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness, a sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

d) Other patterns

Blood stasis

Very dull-sallow complexion, mental restlessness, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Firm pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

8. BLUSHING

a) Full

Heart-Heat

Blushing easily when excited or anxious, palpitations, feeling of heat, anxiety, insomnia, tongue with Red tip, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu.

b) Empty/Full

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Blushing easily when excited or anxious, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, thirst with desire to sip fluids, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, HE-6 Yinxi, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

c) Other patterns

Liver-Yang rising

Blushing easily when upset, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Fire

Blushing easily after drinking alcohol, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Blushing easily when worried, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum that may be blood-tinged, dry mouth and throat at night, weak and/or hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body or thin chest, insomnia, anxiety, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid tongue.

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Ears

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Tinnitus and/or deafness*Empty**Full**Other patterns***Itchy ears***Full**Other patterns***Earache***Full**Other patterns***Bleeding from the ears***Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder**Liver-Fire**Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Spleen-Qi deficiency***Discharge from the ears***Full**Other patterns***Excessive wax production***Phlegm**Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder**Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency**Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Toxic Heat with Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood***Swollen ears***Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder**Heat in the Gall-Bladder**Invasion of Wind-Water in the Lungs***Contracted ears***Kidney-Yin deficiency**Aftermath of acute Heat in febrile diseases**Severe Blood stasis in the abdomen with abdominal masses***Dry and contracted helix***Blood stasis**Blood stasis with Damp-Heat**Kidney-Yin deficiency***Sores on the ear***Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver**Invasion of Wind-Heat in the Lesser Yang channels***Warts on the ear***Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver**Stomach-Fire***Yellow helix***Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder**Blood stasis deriving from Heat (Liver and Gall-Bladder)***Pale helix***Yang deficiency**Blood deficiency***Bluish-greenish (qing) helix***Blood stasis from Heat**Blood stasis from Cold**Internal Wind in children***Dark helix***Blood stasis**Blood stasis from Cold**Chronic Heat***Red helix***Lung-Heat**Heart-Fire**Heat in the Lesser-Yang channels**Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder**Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat***Red back of the ear***Invasion of Wind-Heat (especially in children)**Measles***Distended blood vessels on the ear***Lung deficiency with Phlegm-Heat**Blood stasis**Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder**Heart-Heat***Swelling and redness of the concha***Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder**Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Toxic Heat*

The following ear symptoms are discussed:

1. Tinnitus and/or deafness
2. Itchy ears
3. Earache
4. Bleeding from the ears
5. Discharge from the ears
6. Excessive wax production
7. Swollen ears
8. Contracted ears
9. Dry and contracted helix
10. Sores on the ear
11. Warts on the ear
12. Yellow helix
13. Pale helix
14. Bluish-greenish helix
15. Dark helix
16. Red helix
17. Red back of the ear
18. Distended blood vessels on the ear
19. Swelling and redness of the concha

1. TINNITUS AND/OR DEAFNESS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

a) Empty

Kidney deficiency

Tinnitus and/or deafness with gradual onset, tinnitus with low rushing sound, dizziness, backache, tiredness. Other symptoms and signs, including those of the tongue and pulse, depend on whether there is Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guayuan, KI-3 Taixi, BL-23 Shenshu.

b) Full

Liver-Yang rising

Tinnitus and/or deafness, tinnitus with a high-pitched sound, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-43 Xiashi, T.B.-17 Yifeng, G.B.-2 Tinghui.

c) Other patterns

Liver-Fire

Tinnitus and/or deafness with sudden onset, tinnitus with high-pitched sound, red face, blood-shot eyes, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Fire affecting the Liver channel

Tinnitus and/or deafness with sudden onset, tinnitus with high-pitched sound, thirst, bitter taste, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, catarrh, Red tongue with redder sides, Swollen with a sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Tinnitus and/or deafness with gradual onset, tinnitus with low-pitched sound, dizziness, insomnia, anxiety, palpitations, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Heart-Blood deficiency

Tinnitus and/or deafness with gradual onset, tinnitus with low-pitched sound, dizziness, poor memory, palpitations, insomnia, anxiety, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Heart- and Lung-Qi deficiency (deficiency of Gathering-Qi)

Tinnitus and/or deafness with gradual onset, tinnitus with low-pitched sound, tiredness, palpitations, depression, shortness of breath, Pale tongue, pulse Weak on both Front positions.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Tinnitus and/or deafness with gradual onset, tinnitus with low-pitched sound, dizziness, blurred vision, insomnia, poor memory, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat (in the Lesser Yang channels)

Sudden tinnitus and/or deafness, tinnitus with high-pitched sound, headache, stiff neck, sore throat, burning eyes, slight sweating, fever, aversion to cold, tongue Red in the front or sides, Floating-Rapid pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

In my experience, tinnitus from a Deficiency is easier to treat than one from a Fullness.

2. ITCHY EARS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

a) Full**Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder**

Itchy ears, earache, dizziness, tinnitus, headache, sticky taste, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-43 Xiashi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, T.B.-17 Yifeng, G.B.-2 Tinghui.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Itchy ears with sudden onset, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, T.B.-17 Yifeng.

b) Other patterns**Blood deficiency with Internal Wind**

Itchy ears, dryness of the skin around the ears, crusts on the ear, blurred vision, dizziness, giddiness, numbness, Pale and Stiff tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Itchy ears, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

3. EARACHE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

a) Full**Invasion of Wind-Heat**

Earache with acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, T.B.-17 Yifeng.

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Earache, yellow discharge from the ear, dizziness, tinnitus, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-43 Xiashi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, T.B.-17 Yifeng, G.B.-2 Tinghui.

b) Other patterns**Liver-Fire**

Earache with sudden onset, worse with pressure, headaches, dizziness, red face, blood-shot eyes, thirst, bitter taste, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Severe earache, headache, tinnitus, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

Chronic earache in children is always due to a residual pathogenic factor (usually Damp-Heat) after repeated upper respiratory or ear infections (usually treated with antibiotics).

4. BLEEDING FROM THE EARS

a) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Bleeding from the ears, earache, yellow discharge from the ear, dizziness, tinnitus, headache, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver-Fire

Sudden bleeding from the ear, red face, blood-shot eyes, thirst, bitter taste, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Bleeding from the ear that comes and goes, scanty amount, ear not swollen or red, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Occasional slight bleeding from the ear, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-43 Xiashi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, T.B.-17 Yifeng, G.B.-2 Tinghui.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Yellow discharge from the ear, earache, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, T.B.-17 Yifeng.

b) Other patterns

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Thin discharge from the ear that comes and goes, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Toxic Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder

Foul-smelling yellow discharge from the ear, severe earache, irritability, headache, feeling of heat, fever, bitter taste, sticky taste, Red tongue with redder sides and red points with sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Slight discharge from the ear without pain, tiredness, loose stools, feeling of heaviness, feeling of fullness, Pale tongue with white-sticky coating, Soft pulse.

5. DISCHARGE FROM THE EARS

a) Full

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Sticky, thick-yellow discharge from the ear, earache, tinnitus, dizziness, headache, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

6. EXCESSIVE WAX PRODUCTION

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Phlegm

Excessive wax production, dizziness, feeling of muzziness of the head, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heaviness, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

b) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Excessive wax production, discharge of bright-yellow wax, earache, headache, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Excessive wax production, discharge of dull-yellow wax, dizziness, tinnitus, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, backache, feeling cold, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

d) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Excessive ear wax production, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Toxic Heat with Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Excessive wax production, earache, occasional discharge of dull wax, bleeding from the ear, discharge from the ear, Red tongue with red points and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

7. SWOLLEN EARS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Swollen and red ears, earache, ear discharge, a sticky taste, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Swollen and red ears, earache, thirst, bitter taste, irritability, headache, unilateral yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Invasion of Wind-Water in the Lungs

Swollen ears with acute onset, oedema of the face and hands, aversion to cold, fever, headache, white tongue coating, Floating-Slippery pulse.

8. CONTRACTED EARS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Contracted and dry ears, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Aftermath of acute Heat in febrile diseases

Contracted, dry ears, dry mouth, exhaustion, dry skin, dry tongue, Fine pulse.

c) Severe Blood stasis in the abdomen with abdominal masses

Contracted, dry, dull, and dark ears, dry mouth, dry skin, abdominal pain, loss of weight, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

9. DRY AND CONTRACTED HELIX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Blood stasis

Dry, contracted, and dark helix, abdominal pain, chest pain, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organs involved, which may be Liver, Heart, Stomach or Intestines.

b) Blood stasis with Damp-Heat

Dry and contracted helix, abdominal pain, mucus in the stools, loose stools, Purple tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dry, dark, and contracted helix, tinnitus, dizziness, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to sip water, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

10. SORES ON THE EAR

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver

Sores on the ear, red face, headache, irritability, bitter taste, dizziness, hypochondrial pain, Red tongue with yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Invasion of Wind-Heat in the Lesser Yang channels

Sores on the ear, earache, alternating chills and fever, irritability, headache, tongue with Red sides and possibly unilateral white coating, Floating-Rapid and Wiry pulse.

11. WARTS ON THE EAR

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver

Warts on the ear, red face, headache, irritability, dizziness, bitter taste, hypochondrial pain, Red tongue with yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Stomach-Fire

Warts on the ear, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

12. YELLOW HELIX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Yellow helix, bitter and sticky taste, earache, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Blood stasis deriving from Heat (Liver and Gall-Bladder)

Dull, dark-yellow helix, earache, hypochondrial pain, thirst, dry mouth, headache, irritability, reddish-purple tongue with unilateral yellow coating, Wiry-rapid pulse.

13. PALE HELIX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Yang deficiency

Pale helix, feeling cold, tiredness, cold limbs, loose stools, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

b) Blood deficiency

Pale, dry helix, dry skin, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness of the limbs, scanty periods, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

14. BLUISH-GREENISH (QING) HELIX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Blood stasis from Heat

Greenish, dry helix, abdominal pain, chest pain, Reddish-Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

b) Blood stasis from Cold

Bluish, wet helix, abdominal pain, chest pain, Bluish-Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

c) Internal Wind in children

Greenish helix, tremor, convulsions, fever, opisthotonos, Stiff tongue, Wiry pulse.

15. DARK HELIX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Blood stasis

Dark and dry helix, dry mouth, dark complexion, dry skin, abdominal pain, chest pain, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

b) Blood stasis from Cold

Dark, moist helix, abdominal pain, chest pain, Bluish-Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

c) Chronic Heat

Dark and dry helix, red face, thirst, dry skin, dry mouth, dry stools, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

16. RED HELIX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Lung-Heat

Red helix, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Heart-Fire

Red helix, red face, bitter taste, thirst, palpitations, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of

heat, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Heat in the Lesser-Yang channels

Red helix, bitter taste, hypochondrial discomfort, dry throat, alternation of cold and hot feeling with predominance of the latter, irritability, tongue with unilateral yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

d) Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder

Red and swollen helix, bitter and sticky taste, burning on urination, excessive vaginal discharge, irritability, feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, vomiting, dark urine, tongue with Red sides and sticky-yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

e) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Red and dry helix, tinnitus, malar flush, dry mouth with desire to sip water, dizziness, night-sweating, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

17. RED BACK OF THE EAR

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Invasion of Wind-Heat (especially in children)

Red back of the ear, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

b) Measles

Red back of the ear, papular rash, fever, thirst, sweating, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

18. DISTENDED BLOOD VESSELS ON THE EAR

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Lung deficiency with Phlegm-Heat

Distended, red blood vessels on the ear, cough, breathlessness, expectoration of sticky sputum, weak voice, tiredness, feeling of oppression of the chest, Pale and Swollen tongue with sticky coating, pulse Slippery in general but Weak on the right-Front position.

b) Blood stasis

Distended, purple blood vessels on the ear, dark complexion, headache, abdominal pain, chest pain, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

c) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Distended, red blood vessels on the ear, earache, dizziness, tinnitus, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Heart-Heat

Distended red blood vessels on the ear, especially on the lobe, palpitations, feeling of heat, anxiety, insomnia, Red tip of the tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

19. SWELLING AND REDNESS OF THE CONCHA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 9](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Swelling and redness of the concha, earache, ear discharge, itchy ear, headache, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Redness and slight swelling of the concha, earache, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Toxic Heat

Swelling and redness of the concha, earache, discharge from the ear, swollen neck glands, headache, thirst, Red tongue with red points and thick, sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

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Nose

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Polyyps

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18. Polyyps
19. Flapping alae nasi (outside of the nostrils)
20. Ulcers on the nose
21. Papules on the nose

1. PALE NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Yang deficiency with Empty Cold

Pale tip of the nose, discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium that is better after eating and better with pressure or massage, no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods, vomiting of clear fluid, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

b) Liver-Blood deficiency

Pale bridge of the nose, dull-pale face, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Phlegm-Fluids

Pale and swollen tip of the nose, swollen face, greasy skin, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting or watery fluids, dry mouth without desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Slippery pulse.

2. YELLOW NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Spleen

Bright-yellow nose if Heat predominates or dull-yellow nose if Dampness predominates; greasy skin, fullness of the epigastrium, epigastric or abdominal pain, sticky

The following nose symptoms and signs are discussed:

1. Pale nose
2. Yellow nose
3. Red nose
4. Bluish-greenish nose
5. Reddish-purple nose
6. Dark nose
7. Sneezing
8. Blocked nose
9. Runny nose
10. Itchy nose
11. Dry nostrils
12. Nose bleed
13. Nose ache
14. Nose pain
15. Swollen nose
16. Bad smell

taste, thirst with no desire to drink, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness of the body, thirst, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency with retention of Dampness

Dull-yellow tip of the nose, dull-pale face, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale or sallow complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness, a sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Dull, dark-yellow bridge of the nose, dark complexion, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

d) Spleen-Heat

Bright-yellow and dry tip of the nose, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

e) Phlegm-Fluids

Dull-yellow and swollen tip of the nose, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting or watery fluids, dry mouth without desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Slippery pulse.

3. RED NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Lung-Heat

Red bridge of the nose in its upper part, flaring of nostrils, red face, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver-Fire

Red bridge of the nose in its central part, red face, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Spleen-Heat

Red and dry tip of the nose, thirst, dry lips, dry mouth, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, mouth ulcers, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Red bridge of the nose with acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

4. BLUISH-GREENISH NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Liver-Blood stasis

Greenish bridge of the nose, dark complexion, headache, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

b) Internal Cold

Bluish bridge of the nose, greyish-pale face, abdominal pain, cold limbs, feeling cold, diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

c) Phlegm-Fluids

Bluish and swollen tip of the nose, swollen face, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting or watery fluids, dry mouth without desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Slippery pulse.

5. REDDISH-PURPLE NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Liver-Blood stasis

Reddish-purple bridge of the nose, dark complexion, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

b) Heart-Blood stasis

Reddish-purple colour on the bridge between the eyes, palpitations, stabbing or pricking chest pain that may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder, a feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of the lips and nails, cold hands, tongue entirely Purple or Purple only on the sides in the chest areas, Choppy or Wiry pulse.

c) Blood stasis in the Stomach

Dark reddish-purple alae nasi, bleeding gums, stabbing epigastric pain, vomiting of blood, tongue Purple in the centre, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

6. DARK NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Liver-Fire

Dark bridge of the nose, red face, thirst, bitter taste, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue

with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Exhaustion (*Xu Lao*)

Dark, bluish-purple bridge of the nose, extreme exhaustion, weight loss, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

7. SNEEZING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

a) Full

Invasion of Wind

Acute sneezing, aversion to cold, fever, body aches, occipital headache, Floating pulse. Other manifestations depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, Bitong.

b) Empty

Lung-Qi deficiency

Chronic sneezing, allergy to house-dust mites or pollen, itchy nose, tiredness, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-13 Feishu, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-6 Qihai, Bitong.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Chronic sneezing, allergy to house-dust mites or pollen, worse after sex, lower back ache, cold knees, sensation of cold in the lower back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, apathy, oedema of lower legs, infertility in women, loose stools, depression, impotence, premature ejaculation, low sperm count, cold and thin sperm,

decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, KI-3 Taixi, KI-7 Fuliu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, Bitong, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai (Governing Vessel).



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: sneezing is due not only to the lack of diffusion of Lung-Qi, but also to a deficiency of the Kidney's Defensive-Qi system. In addition, the Governing Vessel is involved because it runs through the nose

8. BLOCKED NOSE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

a) Full

Invasion of Wind

Acute blocked nose, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, Floating pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Bitong.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Blocked nose, facial pain, sinusitis, dull headache, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, ST-40 Fenglong, L.I.-11 Quchi, Bitong, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Empty

Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic blocked nose, pale nose, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight

shortness of breath, weak voice, slight cough, spontaneous daytime sweating, propensity to catching colds, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-13 Feishu, LU-7 Lieque, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Bitong.

c) Other patterns

Lung-Heat

Blocked nose, dry nose, red nose, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Blocked nose, red and swollen membranes, sticky-yellow nasal discharge, dry throat, bitter taste, red face and ears, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, hypochondrial fullness, unilateral or bilateral yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder

Blocked nose with occasional yellow discharge, sinusitis, bitter taste, fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen or epigastrium, bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Lung- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Blocked nose, cough, shortness of breath, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, cold limbs, abundant-pale urination, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Blocked nose, purple and swollen nose bridge with an uneven surface, headache, chest pain, Purple tongue.



CLINICAL NOTE

Sinusitis is the most common cause of blocked nose. In children this is nearly always due to a residual pathogenic factor (Damp-Heat) from repeated upper respiratory infections treated with antibiotics.

9. RUNNY NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#); Part 2 Interrogation [Chapter 35](#)

a) Full

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Runny nose with profuse white-watery discharge, itchy throat, acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, cough, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, Bitong.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Runny nose with yellow discharge, acute onset, red nostrils, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi, Bitong.

b) Empty

Lung-Qi deficiency with Empty Cold

Chronic runny nose with white-watery discharge, sneezing, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike to speak, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching cold, tiredness, dislike of cold, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Weak pulse. This may correspond to allergic rhinitis in Western medicine.

Acupuncture

BL-13 Feishu, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-6 Qihai, Bitong. Moxa.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased

libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. This may also correspond to allergic rhinitis in Western medicine.

Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, KI-3 Taixi, KI-7 Fuliu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Bitong, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai (Governing Vessel).

c) Other patterns

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Runny nose with sticky-yellow, foul-smelling discharge, facial pain, feeling of heaviness of the head, sticky taste, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Toxic Heat in the Lungs and Stomach

Runny nose with yellow, red, and swollen nose, bloody discharge, breathlessness, foul breath, cough, headache, swollen and red face, epigastric pain, thirst, tongue Red with red points and thick, sticky, dry, dark-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: a white-watery-runny nasal discharge indicates allergic rhinitis, whereas a sticky-thick discharge indicates sinusitis.

10. ITCHY NOSE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

a) Invasion of Wind

Itchy nose, sneezing, nasal discharge, itchy throat, aversion to cold, fever, cough, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating pulse.

b) Dry-Heat in the Lungs

Itchy and dry nose, dry throat, dry cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils,

thirst, dry mouth and throat, red face, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Toxic Heat in the Lungs

Itchy nose, painful and swollen nostrils, mental restlessness, red nose, skin spots (papules), headache, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with red points in the front and a sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid-Slippy pulse.

d) Damp-Heat in the Spleen channel

Itchy nose with a sticky-yellow discharge, painful and red tip of the nose, facial pain, fullness of the epigastrium, epigastric or abdominal pain, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, poor appetite, thirst, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippy-Rapid pulse.

e) Lung-Qi deficiency

Chronic itchy nose, white-watery nasal discharge, sneezing, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

f) Lung-Qi and Kidney-Yang deficiency (Governing Vessel deficient)

Chronic itchy nose, white-watery nasal discharge, sneezing, allergic rhinitis, allergic asthma, history of childhood eczema, abundant-pale urination, lower backache, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. This is often seen in atopic individuals suffering from allergic rhinitis, and it corresponds to what I call a deficiency of the Defensive-Qi systems of the Lungs and Kidneys.

g) Nose Childhood Nutritional Impairment

Itchy nose, scabs or ulcers on the nose, a watery-yellow nasal discharge, dry skin, hot hands and feet,

itchy nostrils, a tendency for the child to pick his or her nose.

11. DRY NOSTRILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

a) Dryness injuring the Lungs

Dry nostrils, dry throat, dry cough, blocked nose, itchy nose, dry tongue, pulse Fine on the Right-Front position.

b) Lung-Heat

Dry and red nostrils, itchy nose, flaring of nostrils, epistaxis, red face, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, thirst, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach-Heat

Dry and red nostrils, epistaxis, crusts around the nostrils, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Dry nostrils, itchy nose; dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum that may be blood-tinged; dry mouth and throat at night, weak and/or hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body or thin chest, insomnia, anxiety, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Dry nostrils; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon; thirst with desire to drink in small sips, dry stools, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, five-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

f) Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Dry and itchy nostrils, dry crusts on the nostrils, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike to speak, propensity to catching colds, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse, especially on the right side.

g) Blood stasis

Dry nostrils, dry nose bridge, thirst without desire to swallow, headache, dark rings under the eyes, Purple tongue.

h) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Dry nostrils, acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

i) Invasion of Wind-Dryness

Dry nostrils, acute onset, dry cough, dry throat, aversion to cold, fever, dry throat, tickly throat, dry nose, discomfort of the chest, thin-dry-white tongue coating, Floating pulse.

j) Toxic Heat in the Lungs

Dry nostrils, swollen and red nose, flaring of nostrils, cough with expectoration of bloody sputum, fever, chest pain, mental restlessness, Cough, breathlessness, feeling of heat, thirst, red face, Red tongue with red points in the front and thick, sticky, dry, dark-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

12. NOSE BLEED

Part 1 Observation, Chapter 7

a) Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs

Nose bleed often induced by emotional stress, bloodshot eyes, breathlessness, asthma, a feeling of fullness and

distension of the chest and hypochondrium, cough with a yellow or blood-tinged sputum, headache, dizziness, red face, thirst, bitter taste, scanty-dark urine, constipation, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry pulse.

b) Acute Lung-Heat

Nose bleed, flapping of alae nasi, flaring of nostrils, red face, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, thirst, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic nose bleed with pale blood, often induced by overwork, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

d) Stomach-Fire

Nose bleed with dark-red blood, red nose, bleeding gums, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, sour regurgitation, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

e) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Chronic nose bleed with scanty bleeding, dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes, thirst with desire to sip fluids, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions with dreams, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, depression, anxiety, insomnia, excessive menstrual bleeding, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

f) Liver-Blood stasis

Nose bleed with dark blood, which may be associated with the period in women; dark bridge of the nose,

headache, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

g) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Nose bleed, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

h) Residual Dry Heat in the Lungs

Slight nose bleed, dry cough, feeling of heat, dry throat, chest pain, tongue Red in the front and dry, Overflowing-Empty and Rapid pulse.

i) Collapse of both Yin and Yang

Profuse, unstoppable nose bleed, bleeding gums, macules, blood in the urine; profuse sweating, like oily beads; ashen-grey face, mouth open, cold limbs, hands open, incontinence of urine, unconsciousness, weak breathing, Pale-Short tongue, Scattered-Minute pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

The Xi-Cleft points are good to stop bleeding. In the case of the nose, LU-6 Kongzui is applicable.

13. NOSE ACHE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

a) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Nose ache, runny nose, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

b) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Nose ache, sticky-yellow nasal discharge, red nose, barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green

sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, agitation, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Nose ache, watery nasal discharge, decreased sense of smell, sneezing, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike to speak, propensity to catching colds, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse, especially on the right side.

14. NOSE PAIN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

a) Invasion of Wind

Nose pain, runny nose, sneezing, aversion to cold, fever, headache, stiff neck, Floating pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

b) Lung- and Stomach-Heat

Nose pain, blocked nose, red nose, nose bleed, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach channel Damp-Heat

Nose pain, sticky yellow nasal discharge, facial pain, redness of the nose and forehead, blocked nose, sticky-yellow tongue coating.

d) Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Nose pain, dryness and feeling of heat of the nose, scabs on the nose, red nose, malar flush, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum that may be blood-tinged, dry mouth and throat at night, weak and/or hoarse voice,

night-sweating, tiredness, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, five-palm heat, thin body or thin chest, insomnia, anxiety, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Liver-Blood stasis

Severe nose pain, nose bleed with dark blood that may be associated with the period in women, dark nose bridge, headache, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

f) Carcinoma of the nose

Nose pain extending to the head; nose bleed with a swelling of the nasal mucosa.

15. SWOLLEN NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Swollen nose, especially the tip, red nose, sticky-yellow nasal discharge, itchy nose, spots on the nose, feeling of heaviness, especially of the head, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Lung-Heat

Swollen and red nose, especially in its upper part, flaring of nostrils, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Liver-Fire

Swollen and red bridge of the nose, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

d) Heart-Fire

Swollen and red bridge of the nose, especially in the area between the eyes, red face, bitter taste, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing and Rapid pulse.

e) Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Swollen bridge of the nose, especially its upper part; palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, thirst with desire to sip fluids, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, five-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

f) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Swollen nose, dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes, thirst with desire to sip fluids, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions with dreams, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, depression, anxiety, insomnia, excessive menstrual bleeding, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

g) Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Swollen nose, especially on the tip and alae nasi (outside of the nostrils); greasy skin; chronic cough, coming in bouts, with profuse white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate; white-pasty complexion, a feeling of oppression in the chest, shortness of breath, dislike of lying down, wheezing, nausea, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

h) Toxic Heat in the Lungs

Swelling of the nose, spots (red papules) on the nose, whole nose feels hard to touch, pain in the nose, purulent spots on the head appearing 3 to 5 days after the swelling of the nose, flaring of nostrils, fever, headache, cough,

slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, thirst, red face, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

i) Toxic Heat at Nutritive-Qi or Blood level

Swollen nose, painful nose, top of the nose feels hard to touch, tip of the nose oozing pus, red and swollen nose, dark macules, red cheeks, lips and eyes, fever at night, mental confusion, thirst at night, tremor of the limbs, Deep-Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty-Rapid pulse.

j) Heat Childhood Nutritional Impairment

Swelling of the nose, spots on the nose, nose pain, itching of the nose, crusts on the nose, epistaxis, poor appetite, headache, loose stools, thin body, Red tongue with yellow coating, Rapid pulse.

k) Worms in children

Swollen and itchy nose in children, white vesicles on the face, sallow complexion, emaciation, small white spots inside the lips, purple spots inside the eyelids, loss of appetite or desire to eat strange objects (e.g. wax, leaves, raw rice), abdominal pain, itchy anus.

16. BAD SMELL

‘Bad Smell’ refers to the subjective sensation of a bad smell in the nose when one breathes in.

a) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Bad smell in the nose, blocked nose, yellow nasal discharge, facial pain, swollen face, barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, agitation, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Lung-Qi deficiency with Damp-Heat

Bad smell in the nose, blocked nose, yellow nasal discharge, sinusitis, facial pain, dull frontal headache,

feeling of heaviness of the head, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, tiredness, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Soggy pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver

Bad smell in the nose, sticky-yellow nasal discharge, facial pain, fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen or epigastrium, bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Spleen-Qi deficiency with Damp-Heat

Bad smell in the nose, slight nasal discharge, crusts on the nostrils, dull frontal headache, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale or sallow complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness, a sticky taste, poor digestion, thirst without desire to drink, undigested food in the stools, nausea, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Soggy pulse.

17. LOSS OF SENSE OF SMELL

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

a) Full

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Loss of sense of smell, yellow nasal discharge, facial pain, headache, a feeling of heaviness especially of the head, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, thirst without desire to drink, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-11 Quchi, Bitong.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Sudden loss of sense of smell, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, Bitong.

b) Empty**Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency**

Gradual loss of sense of smell, runny nose with white-watery discharge, tiredness, weak voice, propensity to catching colds, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-13 Feishu, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, Bitong.

c) Other patterns**Deficiency of Qi and Blood**

Gradual loss of sense of smell, pale nose, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, palpitations, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Loss of sense of smell, blocked nose, yellow nasal discharge, headache, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Cold-Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen

Loss of sense of smell, white nasal discharge, facial pain, headache, a feeling of heaviness of the head, abdominal fullness, loose stools, tongue with sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

Blood stasis in the Lungs

Gradual loss of sense of smell, blocked nose, pain in the nose, headache, chest pain, cough, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

18. POLYPS**a) Full****Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen**

Polyps, sinusitis, facial pain, swollen nose, sticky taste, loss of sense of smell, feeling of heaviness especially of the head, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-11 Quchi, Bitong.

b) Other patterns**Cold-Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen**

Polyps, loss of sense of smell, white nasal discharge, facial pain, headache, a feeling of heaviness of the head, abdominal fullness, loose stools, tongue with sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

Phlegm in the Lungs

Polyps, cough with expectoration of sticky sputum, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heaviness, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

19. FLAPPING ALAE NASI (OUTSIDE OF THE NOSTRILS)

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Acute Lung-Heat

Flapping alae nasi, flaring of nostrils, red face, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, thirst,

red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slightly flapping alae nasi, dry nose, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum that may be blood-tinged, dry mouth and throat at night, weak and/or hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body or thin chest, insomnia, anxiety, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Flapping alae nasi, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

20. ULCERS ON THE NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Lung-Heat

Ulcers on the nose, red nose, dry nose, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Ulcers on the nose, swelling of the nose, sticky taste, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Liver-Fire

Ulcers on the bridge of the nose, red bridge of the nose, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

d) Toxic Heat in the Liver

Ulcers on the bridge of the nose, nose pain, red and swollen nose, fever, red face, macular eruptions, agitation, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with red points, thick-sticky-dry-dark yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

21. PAPULES ON THE NOSE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 7](#)

a) Stomach-Heat

Papules on the nose, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Lung-Heat

Papules on the nose, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Blood-Heat in the Lungs

Dark papules on the nose, cough, coughing of blood, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue without coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Throat

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Sore throat*Full**Empty/full**Other patterns***Redness of the pharynx***Invasion of Wind-Heat**Stomach-Heat**Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat***Redness and swelling of the pharynx***Full**Empty/full***Redness and erosion of the pharynx***Full**Empty/full**Other patterns***Swollen tonsils***Full**Empty/full***Phlegm in the throat***Full**Other patterns***Goitre (swelling of the sides of the neck)***Full**Full-empty**Other patterns***Itchy throat***Invasion of Wind**Lung-Yin deficiency**Lung Dryness**Dryness invading the Lungs***Dry throat***Empty**Other patterns***Hoarse voice or loss of voice***Empty**Other patterns***White purulent spots in the throat***Epidemic Toxic Heat on the Exterior**Epidemic Toxic Heat in the Interior**Turbid Phlegm in the throat**Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency**Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Heat in the Lungs and Stomach**Kidney-Yang deficiency***Feeling of obstruction of the throat***Full**Other patterns***Redness on the throat***Heart-Fire**Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Lung-Heat**Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Liver-Yang rising**Liver-Fire*

The following throat symptoms are discussed:

1. Sore throat
2. Redness of the pharynx
3. Redness and swelling of the pharynx
4. Redness and erosion of the pharynx
5. Swollen tonsils
6. Phlegm in the throat
7. Goitre (swelling of the sides of the neck)
8. Itchy throat
9. Dry throat
10. Hoarse voice or loss of voice
11. White purulent spots in the throat
12. Feeling of obstruction in the throat
13. Redness on the throat

1. SORE THROAT

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

a) Full**Invasion of Wind-Heat**

Acute sore throat, itchy throat, shivers, fever, slight sweating, headache, tongue Red on the sides or front, thin-white coating, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, LU-11 Shaoshang, L.I.-11 Quchi.

b) Empty/Full**Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**

Chronic sore throat, dry and red throat, dry cough, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, dry throat at night, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Directing Vessel), KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-10 Yuji, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

c) Other Patterns**Damp-Heat in the Stomach**

Chronic sore throat, swollen throat with purulent spots, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, a feeling of heaviness, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, a sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Fire

Sore throat with severe pain, swollen and red throat, intense thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, burning epigastric pain, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Yin

Chronic sore throat; slight pain, often aggravated by exertion; shortness of breath, tiredness, weak voice, dry cough, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Qi stagnation

Chronic 'sore throat' that comes and goes according to the emotional stage; a feeling of a lump in the throat, with a feeling of difficulty swallowing; irritability, sighing, moodiness, depression, sadness, Wiry pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Liver or the Lungs.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

- Apart from Qi stagnation, the throat area can suffer only from Heat (Full or Empty) conditions.
- **Remember:** Qi stagnation in the throat does not always derive from the Liver; it also may derive from the Lungs, Heart, or Stomach.

2. REDNESS OF THE PHARYNX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

a) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Redness of the pharynx, sore throat, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

b) Stomach-Heat

Redness of the pharynx, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Pale-red pharynx, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum, dry mouth and throat at night, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Pale-red pharynx, dry mouth with desire to sip water, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating,

dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

3. REDNESS AND SWELLING OF THE PHARYNX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

a) Full

Invasion of Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat

Red and swollen throat with sudden onset, sore throat, swollen tonsils, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Heat in the Lungs and Stomach

Red and swollen throat with sudden onset, sore throat, a feeling of obstruction in the throat, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-10 Yuji, ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-11 Shaoshang.

Toxic Heat

Red and swollen throat with purulent spots, swollen tonsils with yellow purulent spots, sore throat, fever, thirst, headache, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid-Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-44 Neiting, ST-40 Fenglong, LU-10 Yuji.

b) Empty/Full

Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Chronic slightly swollen throat, red throat, dry throat at night with desire to drink in small sips, dry cough that is worse in the evening, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower backache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, feeling of heat in the evening, 5-palm heat, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Directing Vessel), KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-10 Yuji, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

4. REDNESS AND EROSION OF THE PHARYNX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

a) Full

Heat in the Stomach and Intestines

Erosion, swelling, and a yellowish-red colour of the pharynx, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-43 Xianggu, L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-11 Shaoshang.

b) Empty/Full

Lung-Yin and Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Chronic erosion of the pharynx that comes and goes, slight swelling, dry mouth and throat, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ affected, which may be Stomach, Lungs, or Kidneys.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Directing Vessel), LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli.

c) Other patterns

Toxic Heat

Redness, erosion, swelling and severe pain of the pharynx; swollen tonsils with yellow purulent spots, sore throat, fever, thirst, headache, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid-Slippery pulse.

Severe Yin deficiency

Chronic erosion of the pharynx that comes and goes, no swelling, dryness of the pharynx with greyish ulcers, dry throat, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, night-sweating, feeling of heat in the evening, tongue dry without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be Lungs or Kidneys.

Blood stasis with Phlegm-Heat

Chronic erosion of the pharynx with ulcers with raised, hard edges; dark, dull colour of the pharynx, sore throat, mental restlessness, abdominal pain, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, feeling of heat, thirst with no desire to drink, Reddish-Purple and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

5. SWOLLEN TONSILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

a) Full

Invasion of Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat

Acute swelling and redness of the tonsils, in severe cases oozing pus; severe sore throat, aversion to cold, fever, cough, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-11 Shaoshang.

Toxic Heat in the throat at the Qi level

Acute redness and swelling of the tonsils, which ooze pus; severe sore throat, difficulty in swallowing, high fever, thirst, mental restlessness, a feeling of heat, dark Red tongue with red points and thick, dark-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, LU-10 Yuji, LU-11 Shaoshang, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Toxic Heat in the Stomach and Intestines

Chronic redness and swelling of the tonsils, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, constipation, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, LU-10 Yuji, LU-11 Shaoshang, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

b) Empty/Full

Stomach- and Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Chronic swelling and redness of the tonsils that come and go; dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; thirst with a desire to drink in small sips; dull or burning epigastric pain; feeling of heat in the afternoon; night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, tiredness, malar flush, thin body, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Ren Mai), LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli, LU-10 Yuji, ST-44 Neiting.



CLINICAL NOTE

In my experience, a chronic swelling of the tonsils in children denotes a residual pathogenic factor, usually Dampness. Heat in the Stomach and Large Intestine may also cause a chronic swelling of the tonsils in children.

6. PHLEGM IN THE THROAT

a) Full

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Phlegm in the throat, rattling sound in the throat; barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum; shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, agitation, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, LU-5 Chize, LU-10 Yuji.

Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Phlegm in the throat, a rattling sound in the throat; cough with profuse, sticky-clear sputum that is easy to expectorate; shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heaviness, Swollen tongue with a sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-17 Shanzhong.

b) Other patterns

Phlegm with Lung-Qi stagnation

Phlegm in the throat, a feeling of a lump in the throat, a feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, difficulty in swallowing, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, sputum in the throat, tongue slightly Swollen on the sides in the chest areas, Slippery pulse that is also very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

Phlegm obstructing the clear orifices

Phlegm in the throat, difficulty in speech, rattling sound in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest; dull headache, as if the head were full of cotton-wool; dizziness, blurred vision, expectoration of phlegm, nausea, vomiting, Swollen tongue with sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Phlegm-Heat and Wind

Phlegm in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst with no desire to drink, headache, breathlessness, a rattling sound in the throat, expectoration of yellow sputum, dizziness, giddiness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, Red, Swollen, and Stiff tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Scanty phlegm in the throat, weak rattling sound in the throat, expectoration of white-watery phlegm, lower backache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

When I suspect Phlegm, I always ask patients whether they expectorate some phlegm from the throat, even if only once in the morning. If they reply affirmatively, I take this as a sign of Phlegm, even in the absence of other symptoms.

7. GOITRE (SWELLING OF THE SIDES OF THE NECK)

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

a) Full

Qi stagnation and Phlegm

Relatively soft and large goitre with indistinct margins, normal skin colour, not painful, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of a lump in the throat, sighing, sputum in the throat, hypochondrial distension, irritability, Swollen tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-23 Lianquan, ST-11 Qishe.

Liver-Fire blazing with Phlegm-Heat

Small or medium-sized goitre that is relatively soft and slippery under the finger, headache, exophthalmos

(bulging eyeballs), red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine; barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum; shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, insomnia, agitation, Swollen and Red tongue with redder sides and tip, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-23 Lianquan, ST-11 Qishe, L.I.-11 Quchi.

b) Full-Empty

Liver-Qi stagnation, Spleen-Qi deficiency and Phlegm

Large, soft goitre, depression, irritability, feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, feeling of oppression or distension of the chest and hypochondrium, moodiness, pre-menstrual tension, nausea, vomiting of watery fluids, tiredness, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, weak limbs, loose stools, dull-pale complexion, cold limbs, Pale, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Soggy or Weak and slightly Slippery or Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, BL-20 Pishu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Ren-23 Lianquan, ST-11 Qishe.

c) Other patterns

Blood stasis and Phlegm

Relatively hard goitre with distinct margins, nodules on the thyroid, dark skin colour, painful goitre, a feeling of oppression of the chest, headache, insomnia, anxiety, chest or abdominal pain, sputum in the throat, Purple and Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Heart- and Liver-Yin deficiency with Phlegm

Chronic goitre that may be large or small and relatively soft with slow onset; tremor of the hands, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, blurred vision, floaters in the eyes, dry eyes, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but

with red cheek bones, withered and brittle nails, dry skin and hair, normal-coloured Swollen tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Goitre is by definition due to Phlegm.

8. ITCHY THROAT

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

a) Invasion of Wind

Itchy throat with sudden onset, aversion to cold, stiff neck, fever, headache, Floating pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

b) Lung-Yin deficiency

Chronic itchy throat, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with desire to sip water, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Lung Dryness

Itchy throat, dry cough, dry skin, dry throat, dry mouth, thirst, hoarse voice, dry tongue, Fine pulse.

d) Dryness invading the Lungs

Itchy throat with sudden onset, dry cough, aversion to cold, fever, dry nose, dry and sore throat, tongue Red in the front with dry, thin-white coating, Floating pulse.

9. DRY THROAT

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

a) Empty

Lung-Yin deficiency

Chronic dry throat, hoarse voice, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with desire to sip water, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Directing Vessel), LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Chronic dry throat, dry throat at night with desire to drink in small sips, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, lassitude, depression, slight anxiety, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Directing Vessel), Ren-4 Guanyuan.

b) Other patterns

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Chronic dryness of the throat, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth especially in the afternoon, thirst but either no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Chronic dryness of the throat, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, blurred vision, floaters in eyes, dry eyes, diminished night-vision, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion without lustre but with red cheek bones, muscular weakness, cramps, withered and brittle nails, very dry skin and hair, night-sweating, depression, a feeling of aimlessness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Dry throat with sudden onset, itchy throat, sore throat, aversion to cold, fever, cough, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Dry throat, swollen throat, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, foul breath, a feeling of heat, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, dry stools, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder

Dry throat, bitter taste, thirst, blurred vision, hypochondrial pain, nausea, headache, red eyes, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Lesser Yang pattern (6 Stages)

Dry throat, bitter taste, hypochondriac fullness and pain, alternation of chills and feeling of heat with predominance of the former, irritability, unilateral white tongue coating, Wiry pulse.

Gall-Bladder Heat pattern (Qi level of 4 levels)

Dryness of the throat, thirst, bitter taste, hypochondrial pain, alternation of chills and feeling of heat with predominance of the latter, irritability, unilateral yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Wind-Dryness-Heat invading the Lungs

Dry throat with sudden onset, sore throat, itchy throat, aversion to cold, fever, dry cough, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, dry nose, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

10. HOARSE VOICE OR LOSS OF VOICE

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

a) Empty

Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Chronic hoarse voice, dry throat at night, itchy throat, dry cough that is worse in the evening, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower back ache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Directing Vessel), LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-23 Lianquan.

Lung-Yin deficiency

Chronic hoarse voice, cough that is dry or with scanty-sticky sputum, weak voice, dry mouth and throat, tickly throat, tiredness, dislike of speaking, thin body or thin chest, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating (or with rootless coating) in the front part, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai (Directing Vessel), LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-23 Lianquan.

b) Other patterns**Invasion of Wind-Heat and Dryness**

Hoarse voice with sudden onset, dry throat with sudden onset, sore throat, itchy throat, aversion to cold, fever, dry cough, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, dry nose, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Lung-Heat

Hoarse voice, sore throat, a feeling of blockage of the throat, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Blood stasis and Phlegm

Chronic hoarse voice, sore throat, feeling of obstruction of the throat, thickening of the vocal cords, nodules on the vocal cords, swelling of the throat, headache, chest pain, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

11. WHITE PURULENT SPOTS IN THE THROAT

a) Epidemic Toxic Heat on the Exterior

White purulent spots in the throat, small and with distinct margins, sore and swollen throat, swollen tonsils,

fever, aversion to cold, headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Rapid pulse.

b) Epidemic Toxic Heat in the Interior

White purulent spots in the throat, large spots that may ooze blood; red, swollen, and sore throat; high fever, profuse sweating, red face, thirst, mental restlessness, feeling of heat, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Turbid Phlegm in the throat

Chronic white purulent spots in the throat, dull-pasty complexion, mental restlessness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, wheezing, expectoration of sputum, barking voice, hoarse voice, Swollen tongue with white coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

White purulent spots in the throat, dry throat, dry cough that is worse in the evening, dry throat and mouth, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower back ache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

e) Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

White purulent spots in the throat, dry throat at night, dry cough that is worse in the evening, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower backache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, feeling of heat in the evening, 5-palm heat, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

f) Heat in the Lungs and Stomach

White purulent spots in the throat, swollen throat, painful throat, swollen tonsils, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

g) Kidney-Yang deficiency

White purulent spots in the throat, lower back ache, cold knees, sensation of cold in the lower back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, apathy, oedema of lower legs, infertility in women, loose stools, depression, impotence, premature ejaculation, low sperm count, cold and thin sperm, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

12. FEELING OF OBSTRUCTION OF THE THROAT

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

a) Full

Liver-Qi stagnation

A feeling of a lump in the throat that comes and goes according to the emotional state, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, premenstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou, P-6 Neiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Lung- and Stomach-Qi stagnation

A feeling of a lump in the throat that comes and goes according to the emotional state, sadness, worry, grief, depression, a slight feeling of tightness, oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, difficulty in swallowing, sighing, irritability, epigastric pain and distension, belching, nausea, vomiting, hiccup, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse slightly Wiry on the right.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, P-6 Neiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, HE-Shenmen.

Qi stagnation and Phlegm

A feeling of a lump in the throat, phlegm in the throat that needs frequent clearing, expectoration of scanty sputum, a feeling of oppression of the chest, irritability, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-7 Lieque, P-6 Neiguan, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Other patterns

Lung-Yin deficiency

A feeling of a lump in the throat, dry throat at night, tickly throat, cough that is dry or with scanty-sticky sputum, weak and/or hoarse voice, tiredness, dislike of speaking, thin body or thin chest, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating (or with rootless coating) in the front part, Floating-Empty pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

A slight feeling of a lump in the throat, dry throat at night, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, lassitude, depression, slight anxiety, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

In my experience, a feeling of obstruction in the throat strongly indicates emotional stress with Qi stagnation. Note that this is not always related to the Liver and may be related also to Lungs or Heart. Ban Xia Hou Po Tang is for stagnation of Lung-Qi in the throat from worry or grief.

13. REDNESS ON THE THROAT

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

Here 'redness on the throat' does not mean a redness inside the throat (pharynx), but rather a redness on the skin overlying the throat.

a) Heart-Fire

Redness on the throat that gets worse when patient talks, thirst, bitter taste, palpitations, anxiety, red face, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

'Floating' redness on the throat, dry mouth and throat, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor

memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Lung-Heat

Redness on the throat, dry throat, thirst, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

‘Floating’ redness on the throat, malar flush, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum, dry mouth and throat at night, night-sweating, tiredness, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Liver-Yang rising

‘Floating’ redness on the throat, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, red face, Wiry pulse.

f) Liver-Fire

Redness on the throat, thirst, bitter taste, red face, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, headache, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

I have noticed that a redness on the skin over the throat that appears as the patient talks indicates severe anxiety with Heat or Empty Heat.

Mouth, Tongue, Teeth, Gums, Lips, Palate, and Philtrum

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The followings symptoms are discussed:

1. Mouth
 - a) Mouth ulcers
 - b) Cold sores
 - c) Cracked corners of the mouth
 - d) Itching around the mouth
 - e) Dribbling from the corners of the mouth
 - f) Trembling mouth
 - g) Mouth open
 - h) Deviation of the mouth
2. Tongue
 - a) Itchy tongue
 - b) Painful tongue
 - c) Numbness of the tongue
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 - a) Toothache
 - b) Tooth cavities
 - c) Loose teeth
 - d) Grinding of the teeth

- e) Plaque
- f) Dry and white teeth
- g) Dry and dull teeth
- h) Yellow and dry teeth
- i) Grey teeth
- j) Upper teeth moist and lower teeth dry
- 4. Gums
 - a) Inflamed gums
 - b) Bleeding gums
 - c) Receding gums
 - d) Gums oozing pus
 - e) Pale gums
 - f) Red gums
 - g) Purple gums
- 5. Lips
 - a) Pale lips
 - b) Red lips
 - c) Purple lips
 - d) Bluish-greenish lips
 - e) Yellow lips
 - f) Dry or cracked lips
 - g) Trembling lips
 - h) Peeled lips
 - i) Swollen lips
 - j) Inverted lips
 - k) Drooping lips
 - l) Abnormal lip colour in pregnancy
- 6. Palate
 - a) Pale palate
 - b) Dull-pale palate
 - c) Yellow palate
 - d) Red palate
 - e) Purple palate
- 7. Philtrum
 - a) Flat philtrum
 - b) Stiff-looking philtrum
 - c) Pale philtrum
 - d) Red philtrum
 - e) Bluish-greenish philtrum
 - f) Dark philtrum

1. MOUTH

The following mouth signs are discussed:

- a) Mouth ulcers
- b) Cold sores
- c) Cracked corners of the mouth
- d) Itching around the mouth
- e) Dribbling from the corners of the mouth

- f) Trembling mouth
- g) Mouth wide open
- h) Deviation of the mouth

a) Mouth ulcers

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Full

Stomach-Heat

Ulcers with a red rim on the gums or inside cheeks, bleeding gums, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Heart-fire

Tongue ulcers, thirst, bitter taste, palpitations, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Empty

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Yin Fire

Pale ulcers on the gums or inside cheeks, slightly red face or pale face with a floating red colour on the cheeks, intermittent and recurrent feeling of heat in the face but cold limbs, intermittent sore throat, dry mouth, dry lips, exhaustion, poor appetite, poor digestion, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Weak or Overflowing-Empty pulse. These ulcers are due to Yin-Fire, as described by Li Dong Yuan in his 'Discussion on Stomach and Spleen' (see [Chapter 55](#)).

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-12 Zhongwan, L.I.-4 Hegu, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

Empty/full

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Ulcers with a pale rim aggravated by overwork and lack of sleep, dry throat at night, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, malar flush, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid

pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Acupuncture

SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan to nourish Yin. Other points to clear Empty Heat depend on the organ involved.

Other patterns

Liver-Fire

Ulcers inside the cheeks, very painful and red in colour, thirst, bitter taste, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Toxic Heat

Ulcers inside the cheeks that are red, festering and ooze sticky-yellow pus; fever, thirst, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat with Phlegm

Ulcers inside the cheeks that are red and swollen and ooze thin-yellow pus; aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, nausea, vomiting, a feeling of oppression of the chest, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse

Invasion of Wind-Cold with Kidney deficiency

Ulcers inside the cheeks that are swollen and have a white rim; aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, Pale tongue, Floating-Tight pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: for mouth ulcers on the gums and inside the cheeks in women, treat the Directing Vessel, irrespective of the pattern causing them. If they are on the tongue, treat the Heart channel, especially HE-5 Tongli.

b) Cold sores

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Full

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Cold sores at the corner of the mouth or on the edge of the upper lip, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Cold sores at the corner of the mouth or on the edge of the lower lip, a sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, a feeling of heaviness, nausea, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-11 Quchi, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Empty/Full

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Cold sores at the corner of the mouth or on the edge of the lower lip, dry mouth in the evening, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, dry stools, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Other patterns

Stomach-Heat

Cold sores at the corner of the mouth or on the edge of the lower lip, foul breath, thirst, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Large Intestine

Cold sores on the upper lip, constipation with dry stools, burning sensation in the mouth, dry tongue, burning and swelling in anus, scanty-dark urine, thick-yellow (or brown or black) dry tongue coating, Full-Rapid pulse (often Wiry on both Rear positions).

Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine

Cold sores on the upper lip, abdominal pain that is not relieved by a bowel movement, diarrhoea, mucus and blood in stools, offensive odour of stools, burning in the anus, scanty-dark urine, fever, sweating that does not decrease the fever, a feeling of heat, thirst without a desire to drink, a feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse or pulse that is Slippery and Wiry on both the Rear positions.



CLINICAL NOTE

I use L.I.-4 Hegu contralaterally for the corners of the mouth; that is, on the left for a cold sore on the right and vice versa.

c) Cracked corners of the mouth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Stomach-Heat

Cracked corners of the mouth, thirst, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Cracked corners of the mouth, dry mouth with a desire to sip water, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Cracked corners of the mouth, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, bleeding gums, dull or burning epigastric

pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, dry stools, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Itching around the mouth

Stomach-Heat

Intense itching around the mouth, especially at the corners and below the mouth; cold sores, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Blood deficiency with Empty Wind

Slight itching around the mouth, dryness around the mouth, greenish colour around the mouth, trembling mouth, facial tic, slight flapping of eyelid, blurred vision, floaters, unilateral numbness or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen

Itching around the mouth, wet rash around the mouth, cold sores, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Disharmony of Penetrating and Directing vessels

Itching around the mouth at period time or during the menopausal time, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, irregular periods. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a deficiency of Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang.



CLINICAL NOTE

The area around the mouth is controlled by the Liver channel and the Penetrating and Directing Vessels.

e) Dribbling from the corners of the mouth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Dribbling from the corners of the mouth, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Lung-Qi deficiency with Empty Cold

Dribbling from the corners of the mouth, chronic runny nose with white-watery discharge, sneezing, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching cold, tiredness, dislike of cold, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Heat

Dribbling from the corners of the mouth, painful tongue, mouth ulcers, dry mouth and lips, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry stools, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. This dribbling is due to Stomach-Heat flaring upwards, causing the fluids in the mouth to evaporate.

Wind-Phlegm

Dribbling from the corners of the mouth, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Invasion of External Wind

Dribbling from the corners of the mouth, numbness of the face, deviation of eye and mouth, cannot shut eyelid completely, watery eyes. This is not an invasion of external Wind in the Lung's Defensive-Qi system (as when one catches a cold), but rather an invasion of external Wind attacking the channels of the face, causing facial paralysis (Bell's palsy).

f) Trembling mouth

Liver-Blood and Liver-Yin deficiency with internal Wind

Slightly trembling mouth, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, blurred vision, floaters in the eyes, dry eyes, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but

with red cheek bones, withered and brittle nails, dry skin and hair, night-sweating. The tongue and pulse presentations depend on whether Blood or Yin deficiency predominates.

Qi stagnation and Phlegm

Trembling mouth, dribbling from the corners of the mouth, epigastric or abdominal distension, a feeling of muzziness of the head, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, irritability, a feeling of a lump in the throat, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Stomach-Heat

Trembling mouth, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Wind

Trembling mouth, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

g) Mouth open

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Lung-Qi deficiency with Phlegm

Mouth open, chronic cough that is worse on exertion, scanty phlegm that is difficult to expectorate or dilute watery phlegm, spontaneous sweating, feeling cold, shortness of breath, a feeling of oppression of the chest, weak voice, tongue Pale and slightly Swollen in the front, pulse Empty on the right-Front position and slightly Slippery.

Heart-Fire

Mouth open, tongue ulcers, red face, palpitations, thirst, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Qi deficiency

Mouth open, palpitations, mental dullness, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

h) Deviation of the mouth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Liver-Wind

Deviation of the mouth, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Wind and Phlegm

Deviation of the mouth, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Cold in the channels of the face

Sudden deviation of the mouth, numbness of the face. This is due to an invasion of Wind-Cold, not in the Lung's Defensive-Qi portion (as in a common cold and influenza), but rather in the channels of the face.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Intermittent deviation of the mouth, depending on emotional moods, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Slight deviation of the mouth, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Toxic Heat in the channels of the face

Deviation of the mouth, thirst, bitter taste, swelling and pain of the face, toothache, headache, red eyes, swollen face, Red tongue with red points with thick, sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

2. TONGUE

The tongue signs discussed in this chapter deal only with a few unusual tongue signs; tongue diagnosis itself is discussed in full in [Chapters 23 through 27](#). The tongue signs and symptoms discussed here are:

- a) Itchy tongue
- b) Painful tongue

- c) Numbness of the tongue
- d) Tongue ulcers

a) Itchy tongue

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Heart-Fire

Itchy tip or front of the tongue, burning sensation of the tongue, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight itching of the tongue, especially in the evening; dry mouth and throat, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', thirst with a desire to sip fluids, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Itchy tongue, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, poor memory, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, night-sweating, scanty-dark urine, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Itchy tongue with acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

b) Painful tongue

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Heart-Fire

Painful tongue, especially on the tip; tongue ulcers, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue

with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight pain of the tongue, especially in the evening; dry mouth and throat, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Fire

Painful tongue, bleeding gums, foul breath, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, burning epigastric pain, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, dry stools, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slightly painful tongue, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dry stools, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Liver-Fire

Painful tongue, thirst, bitter taste, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Fire harassing the heart

Painful tongue, thirst, bitter taste, sputum in the throat, palpitations, mental restlessness, red face, a feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of phlegm, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, uncontrolled laughter or crying, shouting, depression, manic behaviour, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-dry-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Numbness of the tongue

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Heart-Blood deficiency

Numbness of the tongue, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Phlegm obstructing the Heart

Numbness of the tongue, swollen tongue, dizziness, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, numbness or tingling of the limbs, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Liver-Wind

Numbness of the tongue, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, tics, convulsions, rigidity of the neck, tremor of limbs, stiff neck, opisthotonos, coma (in severe cases), Stiff, Moving or Deviated tongue, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Wind and Phlegm

Numbness of the tongue, deviated tongue, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Numbness of the tongue, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Chronic Blood stasis

Numbness of the tongue, dark complexion, headache, chest pain, mental restlessness, abdominal pain, dark nails, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Tongue ulcers

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Full

Heart-Fire

Painful tongue ulcers with a raised, red rim; bitter taste, thirst, palpitations, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed

sleep, feeling of heat, red face, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Damp-Heat in the Small Intestine

Tongue ulcers with a red rim, dark urine, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

S.I.-5 Yanggu, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

Empty/Full

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Tongue ulcers with a white rim, dry mouth and throat, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', thirst with a desire to sip fluids, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-6 Yinxi, HE-8 Shaofu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-14 Jueque, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Other patterns

Full Heat in the Small Intestine

Tongue ulcers with a red rim, dry stools, dark urine, painful urination, blood in the urine, abdominal pain, dry-yellow tongue coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

I use HE-5 Tongli as a point to reach the tongue (in addition to other points for the relevant pattern).

3. TEETH

The teeth signs and symptoms discussed are:

- a) Toothache
- b) Tooth cavities

- c) Loose teeth
- d) Grinding of the teeth
- e) Plaque
- f) Dry and white teeth
- g) Dry and dull teeth
- h) Yellow and dry teeth
- i) Grey teeth
- j) Upper teeth moist and lower teeth dry

a) Toothache

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 35

Toothache obviously excludes causes such as abscesses or root canal problems.

Stomach-Fire

Toothache, especially on the lower teeth; mouth ulcers, foul breath, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, bleeding gums, burning epigastric pain, mental restlessness, dry mouth, dry stools, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, sour regurgitation, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Toothache, swollen gums, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, a feeling of heaviness, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, nausea, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Toothache, mouth ulcers, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dry stools, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Dull toothache that comes and goes, weak gums, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Heat in Large Intestine

Severe toothache, especially of the upper teeth; mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, constipation with dry stools, burning sensation in the mouth, dry tongue, burning and swelling in anus, scanty-dark urine, thick-yellow (or brown or black) dry tongue coating, Full-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine

Toothache, especially of the upper teeth; thirst with no desire to drink, mouth ulcers, a sticky taste, abdominal pain that is not relieved by a bowel movement, diarrhoea, mucus and blood in stools, offensive odour of stools, burning in the anus, scanty-dark urine, fever, sweating that does not decrease the fever, a feeling of heat, a feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Spleen and Heart

Toothache, bleeding gums, red lips, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, dry stools, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of External Wind

Toothache, aversion to cold, fever, stiff neck, occipital headache, sneezing. Other symptoms and signs, including those of the tongue and pulse, depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

‘Wind-Cold in the Brain’

Severe toothache extending to the brain after an invasion of external Wind that has not been cleared, Purple tongue.

b) Tooth cavities

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Tooth cavities, especially of the lower teeth; bleeding gums, red lips, thirst with no desire to drink, sticky taste, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of

heat, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Tooth cavities, loose teeth, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine

Tooth cavities, especially of the upper teeth; thirst with no desire to drink, mouth ulcers, abdominal pain that is not relieved by a bowel movement, diarrhoea, mucus and blood in stools, offensive odour of stools, burning in the anus, scanty-dark urine, fever, sweating that does not decrease the fever, a feeling of heat, a feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Kidney deficiency

Tooth cavities, loose teeth, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees. Other symptoms and signs, including those of the pulse and tongue, depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

c) Loose teeth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Stomach-Heat

Loose teeth, toothache, mouth ulcers, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Kidney deficiency

Loose teeth, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, tiredness, pulse Weak on both Rear positions. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Spleen-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Loose teeth, toothache, red cheeks, poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth and lips, dry stools, thin body, sallow complexion with red tip of the nose, night-sweating, a feeling of heat in the evening, Red

tongue without coating and transversal cracks on the sides, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Loose teeth, dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions with dreams, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, depression, anxiety, insomnia, excessive menstrual bleeding, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Grinding of the teeth

Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Grinding of the teeth when tense, irritability, abdominal distension and pain, alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, stools sometimes dry and bitty (small pieces) and sometimes loose, flatulence, tiredness, tongue normal-coloured or slightly Red on the sides, pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

Stomach- and Heart-Fire

Grinding of the teeth, bleeding gums, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, sour regurgitation, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Retention of Food

Grinding of the teeth in children, fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippy pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Weak grinding of the teeth, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Internal Empty Wind

Grinding of the teeth, dizziness, headache, tics, fine tremors, tiredness, blurred vision, poor memory, Fine and slightly Wiry pulse. The tongue may be Pale or Red without coating, depending on whether there is an underlying Blood or Yin deficiency.

Invasion of External Wind

Grinding of the teeth, shivering, aversion to cold, fever, stiff neck, occipital headache, body aches, Floating pulse.

e) Plaque

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Stomach-Heat

Plaque, teeth yellow at the junction with the gums, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Stomach and Kidneys

Plaque, teeth yellow at the junction with the gums, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, dark urine, painful urination, backache, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Plaque, teeth dull yellow at the junction with the gums, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, lassitude, depression, slight anxiety, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

f) Dry and white teeth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Acute Interior Heat following an invasion of Wind-Heat

White, dry teeth, feeling of heat, fever, thirst, sweating, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Heat

White, dry teeth, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

g) Dry and dull teeth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dry, dull teeth that look like dry bones, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, lassitude, depression, slight anxiety, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Very dry, dull teeth that look like dry bones, dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes, thirst with desire to sip fluids, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions with dreams, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, depression, anxiety, insomnia, excessive menstrual bleeding, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Dry, dull teeth, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

h) Yellow and dry teeth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen with predominance of Heat

Yellow and dry teeth, dull-yellow complexion, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dull-yellow and dry teeth, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, lassitude, depression, slight anxiety, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Accumulation of Cold in the abdomen with False Yang above

Yellow and dry teeth, abdominal pain, feeling cold, cold feet, Pale tongue, Tight-Slow pulse.

i) Grey teeth

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Grey and dry teeth, dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions with dreams, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, depression, anxiety, insomnia, excessive menstrual bleeding, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

j) Upper teeth moist and lower teeth dry

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Kidney- and Heart-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty Heat (Kidneys and Heart not harmonized)

Upper teeth moist and lower teeth dry, dry mouth with a desire to sip water, palpitations, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, poor memory, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, a feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip and a Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse or a pulse that is Deep and Weak on both Rear positions and Overflowing on both Front positions.

4. GUMS

The gum signs and symptoms discussed are:

- a) Inflamed gums
- b) Bleeding gums
- c) Receding gums
- d) Gums oozing pus
- e) Pale gums
- f) Red gums
- g) Purple gums

a) Inflamed gums

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Full

Stomach-Heat

Inflamed gums, foul breath; mouth ulcers, especially on the lower gum; thirst, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-21 Liangmen, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Empty/Full

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Inflamed gums, especially the lower gum; bleeding gums, mouth ulcers with a white rim; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, dry stools, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Other patterns

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Inflamed gums, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Purple Leg Teeth Nutritional Impairment Pattern

Swollen, inflamed, and bleeding gums, cracked lips, painful legs, swelling of the legs in patches like clouds and discoloured like unripe aubergine seeds, hardness of the flesh, difficulty in walking. There are actually two manifestations of this pattern, one with Damp-Cold and the other with Toxic-Heat. If there is Damp-Cold, there will also be a feeling of heaviness, cold limbs, oedema, and ache in the joints. If there is Toxic-Heat, there will be a bitter taste, dry mouth, thirst, foul breath, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-dry-yellow coating and an Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

'Walking Crow' Teeth Nutritional Impairment Pattern

In the beginning, hard, red nodules on the gum – after 1 or 2 days, the gums become inflamed and then greyish-black; bleeding gums that are neither painful nor itchy, foul breath, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating. This pattern is more common in children.

b) Bleeding gums

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Empty

Deficient Spleen-Qi not holding Blood

Bleeding gums, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

SP-3 Taibai, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.X-7 Wenliu.

Full/Empty

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Bleeding gums; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, constipation (dry stools), feeling of hunger but no desire to eat, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-7 Wenliu.

Full***Stomach-Fire***

Bleeding and painful gums, foul breath, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, burning epigastric pain, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, sour regurgitation, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-7 Wenliu.

Other patterns***Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat***

Bleeding gums, dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, deafness, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes, thirst with desire to sip fluids, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions with dreams, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, depression, anxiety, insomnia, excessive menstrual bleeding, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Receding gums

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 35](#)

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Receding gums, pale lips, pale gums, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Stomach-Fire

Receding gums, red gums, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, bleeding gums, dry stools, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, sour regurgitation, foul breath, a feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Receding gums, bleeding gums, dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, deafness, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions with dreams, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, depression, anxiety, insomnia, excessive menstrual bleeding, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

Remember: apart from the Stomach, the Kidneys also influence the gums. 'Loose teeth' are a sign associated with a Kidney deficiency in Chinese medicine, but teeth become loose as a result of gum disease.

d) Gums oozing pus

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Stomach-Fire

Gums oozing pus, tooth abscess, red and swollen gums, bleeding gums, toothache, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry stools, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, sour regurgitation, foul breath, a feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat

Gums oozing pus, swollen glands, bleeding gums, aversion to cold, sore throat, fever, tonsillitis, tonsils oozing pus, headache, tongue Red on the sides with red points and a yellow coating, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Severe deficiency of Qi and Blood with Toxic Heat

Chronic recurrent bouts of gums oozing pus, ulcers on the gums that are slow to heal, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

e) Pale gums

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Pale gums, pale lips, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Blood deficiency

Dull-pale gums, tiredness, dizziness, blurred vision, scanty periods, Pale tongue, Choppy or Weak pulse.

Spleen-Yang deficiency with Empty Cold

Bright-pale gums, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, feeling cold, cold limbs, oedema. Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

f) Red gums

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Stomach-Heat

Bright-red gums, swollen gums, bleeding gums, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Red gums, bleeding gums, feeling of heat in the afternoon; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, constipation (dry stools), feeling of hunger but no desire to eat, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Heat

Red gums, dry and red lips, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Spleen Empty Heat

Pale-red gums, poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth and lips, dry stools, thin body, sallow complexion

with red tip of the nose, night-sweating, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, Red tongue without coating and transversal cracks on the sides, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

g) Purple gums

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Blood stasis in the Stomach

Purple gums, bleeding gums, toothache, purple lips; severe, stabbing epigastric pain that may be worse at night; dislike of pressure; nausea; vomiting, possibly vomiting of blood, vomiting of food in a form that looks like coffee grounds, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Heat at the Blood level in febrile diseases

Purple gums, bleeding gums, dark macular rash, mental confusion, fever at night, high fever, irritability, vomiting of blood, epistaxis, blood in stools, blood in urine, Dark-Red tongue without coating, Fine-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

5. LIPS

The lip signs discussed are:

- a) Pale lips
- b) Red lips
- c) Purple lips
- d) Bluish-greenish lips
- e) Yellow lips
- f) Dry or cracked lips
- g) Trembling lips
- h) Peeled lips
- i) Swollen lips
- j) Inverted lips
- k) Drooping lips
- l) Abnormal lip colour in pregnancy

a) Pale lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Spleen

Pale lips, dull-pale complexion, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, thin body, scanty periods or amenorrhoea, insomnia, joint ache. Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Pale lips, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Spleen-Yang deficiency with Empty Cold

Pale and slightly bluish lips or bright-white lips, pale complexion, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, abdominal pain, tiredness, lassitude, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs. Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

b) Red lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Full-Heat

Red and swollen lips, thirst, dry stools, feeling of heat, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Heat in the Heart, Lungs, Stomach, Liver, Kidneys, and Spleen all may cause red lips. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Red, cracked, and dry lips, dry mouth, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. Empty Heat in the Heart, Lungs, Stomach, Liver, Kidneys, and Spleen all may cause red lips. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Red lips (especially in children), aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acute Heat at the Qi level in febrile diseases (Heat)

Red and swollen lips, fever, a feeling of heat, throwing off bedclothes, thirst, profuse sweating, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acute Heat at the Qi level in febrile diseases (Fire)

Red, swollen, dry, and cracked lips, fever, feeling of heat, thirst, dry mouth, dry stools, dark urine, mental

restlessness, Red tongue with dry, dark-yellow, or brown coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

c) Purple lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Blood Stasis

Purple lips, dark complexion, headache, chest, hypochondrial or abdominal pain, palpitations, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Liver or the Heart.

Severe Spleen-Yang deficiency with Empty Cold

Purple lips, pale complexion, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, abdominal pain, tiredness, lassitude, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs. Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

Severe Kidney-Yang deficiency with Empty Cold

Purple lips, dark complexion, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. This is a severe deficiency of Kidney-Yang with internal Empty Cold that leads to some Blood stasis: for this reason, the complexion is dark rather than pale, as it should be in Yang deficiency.

Internal Full Cold

Bluish-purple lips, bright-white complexion, feeling of cold, cold limbs, abdominal pain, bright-pale complexion, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Full-Tight-Slow pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Turbid Phlegm in the Lungs

Bluish-purple lips, sticky taste, breathlessness, expectoration of phlegm, wheezing, inability to lie down, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sticky-dirty tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Heat at the Nutritive-Qi or Blood level in acute febrile diseases

Reddish-purple lips, fever at night, mental restlessness and confusion, macular rash, bleeding, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

Bluish-greenish lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Internal Cold

Bluish lips, bluish-white complexion, feeling of cold, cold limbs, abdominal pain. Other symptoms, including those of the tongue and pulse, depend on whether it is Full or Empty Cold and also on the organ involved.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Greenish lips, greenish complexion, abdominal distension and pain, irritability, chest pain, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Qi and Blood stagnation of the Heart, Lungs, Stomach, or Liver may cause greenish lips. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

e) Yellow lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Bright-yellow lips, sticky taste, dull-yellow complexion, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Cold-Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen

Dull-yellow lips, dull-yellowish complexion, sticky taste, abdominal pain, feeling of cold in the abdomen, cold limbs, feeling of fullness and heaviness, Pale tongue with sticky-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Full Heat with Blood stasis

Dark-yellow lips, feeling of heat, thirst, abdominal pain, headache, chest pain, Reddish-Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy and Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

f) Dry or cracked lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Stomach- and Spleen-Yin deficiency

Dry lips, dry mouth, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly

burning epigastric pain; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Full Heat

Cracked, red, and swollen lips; thirst, dry stools, feeling of heat, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Heat of the Lungs, Stomach, Spleen, and Large Intestine may cause cracked lips. Other symptoms and signs depend on which organ is involved.

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Cracked and dry lips, dry mouth, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. Empty Heat of the Lungs, Stomach, Spleen, and Large Intestine may cause cracked lips. Other symptoms and signs depend on which organ is involved.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Slightly cracked and dry lips, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Blood stasis

Cracked, dry, and purple lips; dry mouth with a desire to drink without swallowing, headache, chest pain, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Blood stasis of the Heart, Lungs, Stomach, or Liver may cause cracked lips. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved. Because there is an interchange between Blood and Body Fluids, severe, long-standing Blood stasis impairs the metabolism of Body Fluids and causes dryness.



CLINICAL NOTE

Dry lips are often a sign 'clinging' the diagnosis of Spleen-Yin deficiency.

g) Trembling lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Slowly trembling lips, pale lips, pale complexion, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Blood Deficiency with Empty Wind

Trembling and dry lips, itching around the mouth, dry skin, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Stomach-Fire

Rapidly trembling lips, red lips, bleeding gums, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, foul breath, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, burning epigastric pain, mental restlessness, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

h) Peeled lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Spleen-Heat

Peeled, fresh red, cracked, and swollen lips; dry lips, mouth ulcers, thirst, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Peeled, dry, cracked lips; poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry stools, thin body, sallow complexion with red tip of the nose, night-sweating, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, Red tongue without coating and transversal cracks on the sides, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

i) Swollen lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Toxic Heat affecting Stomach and Spleen

Swollen, dark lips, thirst, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, pustular rashes, swelling, pain, headache, Red

tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Swollen and bright red lips, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Wind-Heat in the skin

Swollen and bright-red lips with acute onset, urticarial rash, swelling of the throat, itching, red eyes. This corresponds to an allergic reaction to foods or to a bee sting.

j) Inverted lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Severe Yang deficiency

Inverted lips, cold limbs, sweating, feeling cold, lassitude, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, loose stools, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak or Scattered pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Severe Yin deficiency

Inverted lips, feeling of heat, dry skin, dry mouth, dry nails, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Fine or Minute pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

k) Drooping lips

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Spleen-Qi deficient and sinking

Drooping lips, feeling of bearing down in the abdomen, prolapse, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Drooping lips, lower backache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down,

early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

I) Abnormal lip colour in pregnancy

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Blood deficiency

Pale lips in pregnancy, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, dull-pale complexion, palpitations, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Severe Blood deficiency

White-coloured lips, dryness of the corners of the mouth, exhaustion, palpitations, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, dull-pale complexion, dry skin, Pale and dry or Pale and without coating tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Blood stasis from Cold

Bluish lips in pregnancy, abdominal pain that is alleviated by the application of heat, chest pain, headache, cold limbs, Bluish-purple tongue, Tight pulse.

6. PALATE

The following signs and symptoms are discussed:

- Pale palate
- Dull-pale palate
- Yellow palate
- Red palate
- Purple palate

a) Pale palate

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Pale palate that looks like the skin of milk, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Yang deficiency

Pale palate that looks almost white, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling of the epigastrium, lack of taste

sensation, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale and wet tongue, Weak-Deep pulse.

b) Dull-pale palate

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Spleen- and Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull-pale palate, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, dull-pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, thin body, scanty periods or amenorrhoea, insomnia, dizziness, numbness of limbs, blurred vision, 'floaters' in the eyes, pale lips, cramps, withered and brittle nails, dry hair and skin, Pale and dry tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Dull-pale palate, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

c) Yellow palate

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Chronic Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Dull-yellow palate, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling of the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen

Bright-yellow palate, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Red palate

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Full Heat

Red palate, thirst, mouth ulcers, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, Red tongue with yellow coating,

Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

e) Purple palate

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Blood stasis

Purple palate, abdominal pain, chest pain, headache, mental restlessness, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved (usually Liver, Lungs, Stomach, or Heart).

7. PHILTRUM

The following signs and symptoms are discussed:

- Flat philtrum
- Stiff-looking philtrum
- Pale philtrum
- Red philtrum
- Bluish-greenish philtrum
- Dark philtrum

a) Flat philtrum

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Kidney deficiency

Flat philtrum, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, tiredness. Other symptoms and signs, including those of the pulse and tongue, depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Flat philtrum, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

According to the ancient Chinese art of face-reading, a flat philtrum in women may indicate infertility.

b) Stiff-looking philtrum

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Blood stasis

Stiff-looking philtrum, dark lips, abdominal pain, chest pain, headache, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

c) Pale philtrum

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Qi deficiency

Pale philtrum, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Full Cold

Bright-pale philtrum, greyish-pale complexion, abdominal pain, epigastric pain, cold limbs; pain that is alleviated by exposure to heat and by drinking warm drinks and that is aggravated by exposure to cold and by drinking cold drinks; thick-white tongue coating, Tight pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Empty Cold

Pale philtrum, greyish-pale complexion, dull abdominal pain, dull epigastric pain, cold limbs; pain that is alleviated by exposure to heat and by drinking warm drinks and that is aggravated by exposure to cold and by drinking cold drinks; feeling cold, tiredness, Pale tongue with thin-white tongue coating, Deep-Weak pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

d) Red philtrum

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Heat in the Blood

Red philtrum, skin rashes, feeling of heat, thirst, bleeding, mental restlessness, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Red philtrum, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Red philtrum with skin spots that ooze fluid, abdominal pain that is not relieved by a bowel movement, diarrhoea, mucus and blood in stools, offensive odour of stools, burning in the anus, scanty-dark urine, fever, sweating

that does not decrease the fever, a feeling of heat, thirst without a desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

e) Bluish-greenish philtrum

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Internal Cold

Bluish philtrum, feeling cold, abdominal pain, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Full or Empty Cold.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Greenish philtrum, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

f) Dark philtrum

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 8](#)

Heat in the Blood

Dark philtrum, skin rashes, feeling of heat, thirst, bleeding, mental restlessness, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner

Dark philtrum, yellow, itchy vaginal discharge, lower abdominal pain, dark and/or cloudy urine, tongue with sticky-yellow coating on the root, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

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The following eye symptoms are discussed:

1. Blurred vision and floaters
2. Itchy eyes
3. Dry eyes
4. Hot and painful eyes
5. Streaming eyes
6. Discharge from the eyes
7. Yellow eyes (sclera)
8. Red eyes (sclera)
9. Bluish-greenish eyes (sclera)
10. Dark eyes (sclera)
11. Red corners of the eyes
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14. Red eyelids
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50. Contracted pupils
51. Closed eyes
52. Open eyes
53. Quivering eyeball
54. Eyeball turning up
55. Inverted eyelashes
56. Sudden blindness
57. Cataract

1. BLURRED VISION AND FLOATERS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

There are three Chinese terms that may be translated as 'blurred vision'. The first is *mu xuan* (*mu* meaning 'eye'), in which the term *xuan* suggests also dizziness; the second is *mu hun*, in which the term *hun* suggests 'faint feeling'; and the third is *mu hua*, in which the term *hua* means 'flower' and the two terms together indicate that the patient sees objects that look like flowers or butterfly wings (i.e. floaters). This third term thus could be translated more specifically as 'seeing floaters'. The Chinese term for blurred vision, therefore, also implies the symptom of dizziness, and there is a certain overlap between these two terms and symptoms. In fact, the term for 'dizziness' is *xuan yun*, *xuan* being the same character as in *mu xuan*, meaning blurred vision.

a) Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency

Blurred vision and/or floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, L.I.-4 Hegu, Yuyao.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Blurred vision and/or floaters, dry eyes, diminished night-vision, dizziness, dry hair, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion without lustre but with red cheek-bones, cramps, withered and brittle nails, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai, L.I.-4 Hegu, Yuyao.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Blurred vision and/or floaters, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Yuyao.

b) Full

Turbid Phlegm in the head

Blurred vision and/or floaters, dull headache with a feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, poor memory and concentration, dizziness, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-4 Hegu, Yuyao.

c) Other patterns

Liver-Yang rising

Blurred vision and/or floaters often occurring during a headache attack, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Heart-Blood deficiency

Blurred vision and/or floaters, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Liver-Fire

Blurred vision, blood-shot eyes, painful eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Blurred vision, dizziness, tinnitus, bitter taste, dry throat, irritability, red face and ears, hypochondrial fullness, unilateral or bilateral yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Deficiency of Minister Fire (Kidney-Yang deficiency)

Blurred vision and/or floaters, watery eyes, lower backache, cold knees, sensation of cold in the lower back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, infertility in women, impotence, premature ejaculation, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Blurred vision and/or floaters, tired eyes, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

2. ITCHY EYES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

Liver-Blood deficiency

Slightly itchy eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dull-pale complexion, scanty menstruation, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Itchy eyes, floaters, dry eyes, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but with red cheek-bones, withered and brittle nails, dry skin and hair, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Liver-Fire

Severely itchy eyes, blood-shot eyes, painful eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity

to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Itchy eyes, red eyes, burning sensation in the eyes, redness in the inner canthus of the eyes, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Wind

Itchy eyes, dry eyes, blurred vision, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of the limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Itchy eyes, discharge from the eyes, yellow complexion and eyes, blurred vision, heavy feeling in eyelids, dizziness, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Itchy eyes with sudden onset, unbearable itching, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

3. DRY EYES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

a) Empty

Liver-Yin deficiency

Dry eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but with red cheek-bones, withered and

brittle nails, dry skin and hair, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai, L.I.-4 Hegu, Yuyao.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dry eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, lassitude, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, KI-6 Zhaohai, Yuyao.

b) Full

Liver-Fire

Dry and red eyes with burning sensation, blood-shot eyes, painful eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-6 Zhaohai, Yuyao.

c) Other patterns

Heart-Yin deficiency

Dry eyes, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

Severe Liver-Blood deficiency

Dry eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale and Thin tongue with very Pale or orange sides, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dry eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dry cough that is worse in the evening, dry throat and mouth, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower back ache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

4. HOT AND PAINFUL EYES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

a) Full

Liver-Fire

Hot and painful eyes, blood-shot eyes, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu.

Heart-Fire

Hot and painful eyes, red eyes, redness of the inner canthus of the eyes, burning sensation in the eyes, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, HE-5 Tongli.

b) Other patterns

Liver-Yang rising

Hot and painful eyes, a feeling of distension of the eyes, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Wind

Painful eyes (not necessarily hot), tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Damp-Heat in the head

Hot and painful eyes, sticky eyelids, heaviness of eyelids, a sticky taste, facial pain, sticky-yellow nasal discharge, a feeling of heaviness of the head, thirst without desire to drink, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Heat

Hot and painful eyes, sticky eyelids, blurred vision, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, a feeling of heat, red face, greasy skin, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, expectoration of yellow sputum, dizziness, nausea, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Blood Stasis in the head

Painful eyes (not necessarily hot), dark rings under the eyes, headache, dark complexion, bulging eyes, mental agitation, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull ache in the eyes (not necessarily hot), blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Heart-Blood deficiency

Dull ache in the eyes (not necessarily hot), dull headache, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Kidney deficiency

Dull ache in the eyes (not necessarily hot), dull occipital headache, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, tinnitus, lower back ache, poor memory. Other manifestations, including tongue and pulse, depend on whether there is Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Deficiency of Qi and Yin

Slightly hot and painful eyes, mild pain, desire to shut eyes, dry eyes, slightly red eyes, dizziness, tiredness, dry throat, loose stools, poor appetite, Pale tongue or normal-coloured tongue without coating, Weak or Floating-Empty pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Hot and painful eyes with sudden onset, red eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

5. STREAMING EYES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

There are traditionally two types of streaming eyes: one is called *liu lei*, which indicates runny and streaming eyes and is described here; the other is called *yan chi*, which indicates a thick discharge from the eye and is described under 'Discharge from the eyes'.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Streaming eyes, floaters, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. This is called 'Cold streaming'.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Streaming eyes, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. This is called 'Cold Streaming'.

Liver-Blood deficiency with Liver-Heat

Streaming eyes, itchy eyes, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull pale face with 'floating' red colour on the cheeks, thirst, irritability, headache, tongue Pale but also slightly Red on the sides, pulse Choppy or Fine and slightly Rapid.

Liver-Fire

Streaming eyes, blood-shot eyes, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine,

Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Streaming eyes, itchy eyes, red and dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, malar flush, lower back ache, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Streaming eyes, red, red inner canthus of the eyes, painful eyes, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Phlegm in the Spleen and Lungs

Streaming eyes, swollen eyelids, sticky eyelids, chronic cough coming in bouts with profuse white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate, white-pasty complexion, a feeling of oppression in the chest, shortness of breath, dislike of lying down, wheezing, nausea, abdominal fullness, tendency to obesity, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

Empty Cold in the Liver channel

Streaming eyes; fullness and distension of the hypogastrium with pain that refers downwards to the scrotum and testis and upwards to the hypochondrium (the pain is alleviated by warmth, straining of the testis, or contraction of the scrotum); vertical headache, feeling of cold, cold hands and feet, vomiting of clear-watery fluid or dry vomiting, Pale and wet tongue with a white coating, Deep-Wiry-Fine-Slow.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Streaming eyes with sudden onset, itchy eyes, pain in the eye, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed

or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse. This is called 'Hot Streaming'.

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Streaming eyes with sudden onset, itchy eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

6. DISCHARGE FROM THE EYES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#); Part 1 Observation [Chapter 6](#)

'Discharge from the eyes' is a translation of the Chinese term *yan chi*, which indicates a thick discharge from the eyes, as opposed to a watery one, which is called *liu lei*.

Liver-Fire

Yellow discharge from the eyes, blood-shot eyes, painful eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Yellow discharge from the eyes, red, painful eyes, palpitations, thirst, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Yellow, thin discharge from the eyes, dry and red eyes, feeling of heat in the evening, dry mouth at night, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be Liver, Heart, Kidneys, or Lungs.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Chronic light watery discharge from the eyes that is aggravated by over-exertion, poor appetite, loose

stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Yellow discharge from the eyes, itchy and red eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Toxic Heat (Measles)

Thick, yellow discharge from the eyes, fever, thirst, restlessness, red eyes, Red tongue with red points and thick, dark-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. This corresponds to the Qi level of measles.

7. YELLOW EYES (SCLERA)

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Damp-Heat with predominance of Heat

Bright-yellow sclera like a tangerine peel, thirst, dry mouth, a feeling of heat, bitter taste, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, Red tongue with sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat with predominance of Dampness

Dull-yellow sclera, thirst without a desire to drink, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Cold-Dampness

Dull, dark-yellow sclera, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, cold limbs, loose stools, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Toxic Heat

Deep-yellow sclera, blood-shot eyes, fever, feeling of heat, agitation, red skin rashes, boils, headache, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-dark yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Light-yellow sclera, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Blood stasis

Dark, dull-yellow or brown sclera, dark rings under the eyes, headache, abdominal pain, agitation, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved which could be Heart or Liver.

8. RED EYES (SCLERA)

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Liver-Fire

Red eyes, burning eyes, painful eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Red eyes, painful eyes, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Red eyes, blurred vision, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, malar flush, dry eyes, blurred vision, lower back ache, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty

menstruation, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Red eyes with sudden onset, itchy eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Lung-Heat or Phlegm-Heat

Red eyes, flaring of nostrils, red face, fever, cough with profuse yellow sputum, a feeling of muzziness of the head, a feeling of oppression of the chest, breathlessness, thirst, feeling of heat, chest ache, tongue with sticky-yellow tongue coating, Overflowing-Rapid or Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Red eyes, especially the inner corner, headache from occiput to top of head and eyes, feeling of heat, burning on urination, difficult urination, scanty-dark urine, sticky-yellow tongue coating on the root, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

9. BLUISH-GREENISH EYES (SCLERA)

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

'Bluish-greenish' is a translation of the Chinese colour *qing*, which in certain pathologies (e.g. Cold) refers to a bluish colour and in others (e.g. Liver patterns) to a greenish colour.

Liver-Wind

Greenish sclera, headaches, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Internal Cold

Bluish sclera, feeling of cold, cold limbs, abdominal pain, chronic pain, abundant-pale urine, Pale tongue,

Tight-Slow pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved and on whether it is Full- or Empty-Cold.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Bluish sclera, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

10. DARK EYES (SCLERA)

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Phlegm

Dark, brownish sclera, a feeling of muzziness of the head, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heaviness, sputum in the throat, dizziness, nausea, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dark sclera, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, nocturnal emissions, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, delayed cycle, infertility, normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Severe Full Heat

Dark sclera, a feeling of heat, thirst, agitation, mental restlessness, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

11. RED CORNERS OF THE EYES

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Heat of the Liver, Heart, or Lungs may manifest with a redness in the corners of the eyes, and this may not necessarily coincide with the areas described by the Five Wheels (see [Chapter 6](#)).

Liver-Fire

Redness of either corner of the eye, pain in the eyes, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Red inner corner, pain in the eyes, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Lung-Heat

Red inner corner, red face, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight redness of either corner, blurred vision, floaters in the eyes, dry eyes, diminished night-vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, scanty menstruation or heavy menstrual bleeding (if Empty Heat is severe), red cheek-bones, cramps, withered and brittle nails, very dry hair and skin, anxiety, a feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight redness of the inner corner, malar flush, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, dry mouth and throat, a feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight redness of the inner corner, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum that may be blood-tinged, dry

mouth and throat at night, weak and/or hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body or thin chest, insomnia, anxiety, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid tongue.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight redness of the inner corner, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower back ache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat

Red corners, yellow, sticky discharge from the eyes, red and swollen eyelids, epigastric fullness, a sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, a feeling of heat, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Red corners with sudden-onset itchy eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

12. PALE CORNERS OF THE EYE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Blood deficiency

Pale corners, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, numbness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. Other symptoms depend on the organ involved, which may be Liver or Heart.

Yang deficiency

Pale corners, feeling cold, cold limbs, tiredness, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. Other symptoms

and signs depend on the organ involved which may be Spleen or Kidneys.

13. STYE

Heat in Lungs and Spleen

Stye on the upper eyelid, red eyes, tears flowing from the eyes, swollen and hard eyelids, pain in the eye, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, dry stools, scanty-dark urine, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heat in Lungs and Stomach

Stye on the lower eyelid, red eyes, tears flowing from the eyes, swollen and hard eyelids, pain in the eye, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Chronic styes on the upper eyelid that come and go and are aggravated by over-exertion, swollen and soft eyelids, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale or sallow complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness, a sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Stye, red and swollen eyelids, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

14. RED EYELIDS

Part 1 Observation, Chapter 6

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Red eyelids, discharge from the eye, swollen eyelids, painful and itchy eyes, a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull headache, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Heat

Redness and heat of the upper eyelids, red and dry lips, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Stomach-Heat

Redness and heat of the lower eyelids, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Red with sudden onset, red eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

15. DARK EYELIDS

Kidney deficiency

Dark eyelids, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, Weak pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Cold-Phlegm

Greyish, dull eyelids like soot, cough with expectoration of white-watery sputum, feeling cold, cold hands and feet, nausea, vomiting, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, dull-white complexion, pale urine, Pale and Swollen tongue with wet-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Phlegm-Heat

Dark, red and swollen eyelids, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, a feeling of heat, red face, greasy skin, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, expectoration of yellow sputum, dizziness, nausea, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Wind-Phlegm

Dark eyelids, a dull-yellow complexion, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

16. GREEN EYELIDS

Stomach-Cold

Green eyelids, severe pain in the epigastrium, a feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth, vomiting of clear fluids (which may alleviate the pain), nausea; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; preference for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

17. PALE EYELIDS

Blood deficiency

Pale eyelids, pale inside the eyelids, dull-pale complexion, dry hair, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Yang deficiency

Pale eyelids, pale inside the eyelids, feeling cold, cold limbs, loose stools, abundant-clear urination, tiredness,

Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Retention of Food

Pale colour inside the eyelids surrounded by yellow; fullness, pain, and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting; nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippy pulse.

18. SWOLLEN EYELIDS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Swollen, red, and itchy eyelids, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Swollen and dry eyelids, poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth and lips, dry stools, thin body, sallow complexion with red tip of the nose, night-sweating, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, Red tongue without coating and transversal cracks on the sides, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Heat

Swollen and red eyelids, red and dry lips, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Water overflowing

Gradual swelling of the eyelids, pale eyelids, oedema of the face and hands, cold hands and feet, scanty urination, pale complexion, feeling cold, loose stools, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Cold-Phlegm

Gradual swelling of the eyelids, pale eyelids, cough with expectoration of white-watery sputum, feeling cold, cold hands and feet, nausea, vomiting, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, dull-white complexion, pale urine, Pale and Swollen tongue with wet-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

19. BOIL ON THE EYELID

Toxic Heat in the Stomach

Boil on the lower eyelid, red eyes, painful eyes, swollen eyelids, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, a feeling of heat, sour regurgitation, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Yin

Chronic boil on the eyelid that is shaped like a small bean and comes and goes, pale in colour; dry eyes, dull pain of the eye, tiredness, shortness of breath, weak and/or hoarse voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, loose stools, tongue Pale or normal-coloured without coating, Empty or Floating-Empty pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic boils on the upper eyelid that come and go and may move from eye to eye, aggravated by over-exertion; poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Damp-Heat

Chronic boils on the upper eyelid that come and go, greasy skin, sinus problems, facial ache, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, sticky taste, a feeling of fullness of the epigastrium and/or abdomen, epigastric and/or abdominal pain, poor appetite, a sticky taste, a feeling of heaviness of the body, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, vomiting, loose stools,

dull-yellow complexion like tangerine peel, Pale tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Soggy-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Boil of the eyelid with sudden onset, red and itchy eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

20. PAIN OF THE EYELIDS

Heat in Lungs and Spleen

Pain of the upper eyelid, red eyes, tears flowing from the eyes, swollen and hard eyelids, pain in the eye, headache, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of the nostrils, thirst, red face, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, dry stools, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heat in Lungs and Stomach

Pain of the lower eyelid, red eyes, tears flowing from the eyes, swollen and hard eyelids, pain in the eye, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of the nostrils, thirst, red face, burning epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

21. FLAPPING EYELIDS

Blood deficiency with Internal Wind

Flapping eyelids, facial tic, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Slightly flapping eyelids, a feeling of tiredness of the eyelids, desire to shut the eyes, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude,

pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Flapping of the eyelids with sudden onset, itchy eyes, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing, body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

22. DROOPING EYELIDS

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficient and sinking

Drooping eyelids, aggravated by over-exertion and alleviated by rest, depression, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, bearing-down feeling, prolapse of uterus, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Drooping eyelids, blurred vision, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Liver and Kidney deficiency

Drooping eyelids, dry eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, tinnitus, lower back ache. Other symptoms depend on whether there is Yin or Yang deficiency.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Drooping eyelids, irritability, headache, chest pain, abdominal distension, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Stomach-Heat

Drooping eyelids, red and swollen eyelids, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind

Drooping of the eyelids, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, Floating pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

23. LOSS OF CONTROL OF THE EYELIDS

'Loss of control of the eyelid' indicates a condition in which the patient cannot open the eyes, the eyelids tremble, and he or she loses voluntary control of the eyelids. This condition is more common in children.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Loss of control of both eyelids, uncomfortable sensation of the eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Loss of control of both eyelids, trembling eyelids, greenish complexion, irritability, abdominal distension and pain, alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, stools sometimes dry and bitty (small pieces) and sometimes loose, flatulence, tiredness, tongue normal-coloured or slightly Red on the sides, pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

Wind-Heat affecting the Liver channel

Loss of control of both eyelids, eyelids trembling upwards and downwards and from side to side as if blown by the wind, fever, aversion to cold, tongue Red in the front and with a thin-white coating, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Childhood Nutritional Impairment

Loss of control of both eyelids, trembling eyelids, streaming eyes, uncomfortable sensation of the eyes, red sclera, worse in the afternoon, abdominal distension, diarrhoea, thin body, sticky tongue coating, Weak pulse.

24. NODULES WITHIN THE EYELIDS

In Western medicine, nodules within the eyelids correspond to external hordeolum or meibomian cyst. An

external hordeolum (stye) is a small abscess caused by an acute staphylococcal infection of a lash follicle. A meibomian cyst is a chronic lipogranulomatous inflammation secondary to retention of sebum caused by obstruction of a duct of a meibomian gland.

Damp-Phlegm obstructing the Spleen

Nodules within the eyelids, shaped like grains of rice or small beans; discharge from the eyes, neither painful nor itchy, eyelids not red, nodules moveable, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, muzziness of the head, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Phlegm-Heat obstructing the Spleen

Nodules within the eyelids, shaped like grains of rice or small beans; yellow discharge from the eyes, painful eyelids, red eyelids, nodules moveable, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, muzziness of the head, thirst without desire to drink, a feeling of heat, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

25. SMALL RED GRAINS INSIDE THE EYELIDS

'Small red grains inside the eyelids' corresponds to vernal keratoconjunctivitis in Western medicine. This is an allergic disorder that is common in atopic patients but occurs also in non-atopic patients. It manifests with intense itching, lachrymation, photophobia, burning and a sensation of a foreign body in the eye.

Damp-Heat in the Spleen

Small red grains inside the eyelids, yellow discharge from the eyes, itchy eyes, a feeling of heaviness of the head, fullness of the epigastrium, epigastric or abdominal pain, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness of the body, thirst, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Wind-Heat affecting the Spleen channel

Small red grains inside the eyelids with sudden onset, red eyes, sore throat, itchy throat, itchy eyes, aversion to cold, fever, headache, tongue Red in the front or sides, Floating-Rapid pulse.

26. REDNESS INSIDE THE LOWER LIDS

Full Heat

Redness inside the lower lids, thirst, mental restlessness, feeling of heat, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Thin, red line inside the lower lids, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, mental restlessness, feeling of heat in the evening, dry throat at night, night-sweating, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

27. STRABISMUS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Strabismus from childhood, short-sightedness, weak-constitution child, poor bone development in children, softening of the bones in adults, deafness, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse indicate Kidney-Essence deficiency against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency. Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse indicate against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Liver-Wind

Strabismus, headaches, vertigo, tremors, tinnitus, tics, convulsions, rigidity of the neck, tremor of the limbs, stiff neck, opisthotonos; in severe cases, coma; Stiff, Moving or Deviated tongue, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Yang rising

Strabismus, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Severe, chronic deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Liver

Strabismus, extreme exhaustion, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, dry skin and hair, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Internal Cold

Strabismus, greyish-pale complexion, abdominal pain, epigastric pain, cold limbs; pain alleviated by exposure to heat and by drinking warm drinks and aggravated by exposure to cold and by drinking cold drinks; thick-white tongue coating, Tight pulse.

Liver- Blood stasis

Strabismus, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

Toxic Heat

Strabismus, fever, agitation, mental restlessness, red skin rashes, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-dry-dark yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Phlegm obstructing Lungs and Spleen

Strabismus, blurred vision, chronic cough coming in bouts with profuse white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate, white-pasty complexion, a feeling of oppression in the chest and epigastrium, shortness of breath, dislike of lying down, wheezing, nausea, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

28. MYOPIA

Liver-Blood deficiency

Myopia, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation,

dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Myopia from childhood, blurred vision, floaters, weak child, nocturnal enuresis, pulse Weak on both Rear positions. This is a congenital Kidney and Liver deficiency in children that causes myopia, and due to children's young age, there are not many symptoms. The myopia itself, the weakness of the child, possibly nocturnal enuresis, and a Weak pulse on the Kidney positions are enough to diagnose this pattern.

29. HYPEROPIA

'Hyperopia' is the opposite of myopia; that is, the vision is better for far objects than for near.

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Hyperopia, poor bone development in children, softening of the bones in adults, deafness, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower back ache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse are seen if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse are seen if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Hyperopia, red and dry eyes, blurred vision, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, lower back ache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Hyperopia, blurred vision, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

30. DECREASED NIGHT VISION

Liver-Blood deficiency

Decreased night vision, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Decreased night vision, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Decreased night vision, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Decreased night vision, lower back ache, cold knees, sensation of cold in the back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, weak knees, impotence, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, chronic diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Decreased night vision, blurred vision, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

31. GLAUCOMA

Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat rebelling upwards

Glaucoma, eye pain, red eyes, red face, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, a slight feeling of oppression

of the chest, irritability, pre-menstrual tension, pre-menstrual breast distension, a feeling of a lump in the throat, a feeling of heat, red face, thirst, propensity to outbursts of anger, heavy periods, tongue Red on the sides, Wiry pulse, especially on the left side and slightly Rapid.

Liver-Fire

Glaucoma, red eyes, eye pain, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Glaucoma, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower back ache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Empty Cold in the Liver channel

Glaucoma, eye pain, fullness and distension of the hypogastrium, with pain that refers downwards to the scrotum and testis and upwards to the hypochondrium (the pain is alleviated by warmth); vertical headache, feeling of cold, cold hands and feet, vomiting of clear-watery fluid or dry vomiting, Pale tongue with a wet and white coating, Deep-Tight-Slow.

32. DECREASED VISUAL ACUITY

a) Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency

Decreased visual acuity, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, L.I.-4 Hegu, Yuyao.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Decreased visual acuity, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but with red cheek-bones, withered and brittle nails, dry skin and hair, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai, Yuyao.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Decreased visual acuity, dry eyes, floaters, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, L.I.-4 Hegu.

b) Full

Turbid Phlegm obstructing the head's orifices

Decreased visual acuity, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, dull headache with a feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, poor memory and concentration, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-4 Hegu, Yuyao.

c) Other patterns

Heart-Blood deficiency

Decreased visual acuity, blurred vision, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

33. FEELING OF DISTENSION OF THE EYES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 42](#)

Liver-Fire

Pronounced feeling of distension of the eye, pain in the eye, blood-shot eyes, dry eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Yang rising

Feeling of distension of the eye, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Wind

Feeling of distension of the eye, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, tics, convulsions, rigidity of the neck, tremor of limbs, stiff neck, opisthotonos; in severe cases, coma; Stiff, Moving or Deviated tongue, Wiry pulse.

Phlegm obstructing the Lungs and Spleen

Feeling of distension of the eye, enlarged pupil; chronic cough that comes in bouts with a profuse white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate; white-pasty complexion, a feeling of oppression in the chest and epigastrium, shortness of breath, wheezing, nausea, epigastric fullness, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight feeling of distension of the eye, blurred vision, dry eyes, a feeling of heat in the eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, malar flush, lower back ache, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

A feeling of distension of the eyes when tense, frontal headache, hypochondrial or epigastric distension,

irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Damp-Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder

Feeling of distension of the eyes, swollen red eyelids; fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or epigastrium; bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

34. PROTRUDING EYEBALL

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

In Western medicine, protruding eyeball is called *proptosis*, and in 80% of cases it is due to a thyroid ophthalmopathy; it may also be due to a tumour in the orbit of the eye.

Liver-Fire

Protruding eyeball, pain in the eye, blood-shot eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Protruding eyeball, pain in the eye, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation and Phlegm

Protruding eyeball, pain in the eye, feeling of distension of the eye, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Liver-Wind

Protruding eyeball, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, tics, convulsions, rigidity of the neck, tremor of limbs, stiff neck, opisthotonos; in severe cases, coma; Stiff, Moving or Deviated tongue, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Wind with Phlegm-Heat

Protruding eyeball, dark sclera, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, tics, convulsions, rigidity of the neck, tremor of limbs, stiff neck, opisthotonos; in severe cases, coma; feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, a feeling of heat, a feeling of heaviness, Red and Swollen tongue which may also be Stiff, Moving or Deviated, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Protruding eyeball, uncomfortable sensation of the eye, a feeling of distension of the eye, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Blood stasis

Protruding eyeball, pain in the eye, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, painful periods, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

Damp-Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder

Protruding eyeball, eye ache, ear ache, headache, fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen or epigastrium, bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Toxic Heat

Protruding and painful eyeball, red sclera, gum in the eye, feeling of heat, agitation, fever, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-dry-dark yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang

Slightly protruding eyeball, dizziness, floaters, tinnitus, night-sweating, lower back ache, cold limbs, loose stools. Other symptoms and signs, including tongue and pulse, depend on whether there is a predominance of Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Slightly protruding eyeball, blurred vision, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Rebellious Lung-Qi (Lung-Qi not descending)

Protruding eyeball, chronic cough or asthma, a feeling of oppression of the chest.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Protruding eyeball with sudden onset, pain in the eye, itchy eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

35. SUNKEN EYEBALL

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Severe, chronic, Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Sunken eyeballs, drooping eyelids, shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, dull-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency following food poisoning

Sunken eyeballs following profuse vomiting and diarrhoea, poor appetite, loose stools, Empty pulse.

Collapse of Yin or Yang

Sunken eyeballs with sudden onset, drooping eyelids, Deep-Scattered pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Collapse of Yin or Yang.

36. SCALY EYEBALLS

In Western medicine, 'scaly eyeballs' corresponds to blepharoconjunctivitis, which is characterized by burning, itching, mild photophobia, dilated blood vessels and brittle fibrinous scales.

Lung-Heat

Scaly eyeballs, burning eyes, red eyes, desire to keep eyes shut, streaming eyes, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Scaly eyeballs, burning eyes, red eyes, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Scaly eyeballs with sudden onset, itchy eyes, burning eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

37. ECCHYMOsis UNDER CONJUNCTIVA

In Western medicine, ecchymosis under the conjunctiva corresponds to a sub-conjunctival haemorrhage, which may manifest with excessive lachrymation, a gritty sensation, retrobulbar discomfort, and photophobia.

Liver-Fire

Large ecchymosis under the conjunctiva, red and painful eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Small ecchymosis under the conjunctiva, dizziness, tinnitus, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with desire to sip fluids, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, anxiety, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Ecchymosis under the conjunctiva with sudden onset, burning and red eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Dry-Heat invading the Lungs

Ecchymosis under the conjunctiva, headache, red and burning eyes, dry eyes, dry throat, dry cough, Red tongue with dry coating, Fine pulse.

Liver Phlegm-Fire

Ecchymosis under the conjunctiva, eye ache, protruding eyeball, red face, red eyes, palpitations, mental restlessness, thirst, red face, a feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, uncontrolled laughter or crying, shouting, muttering to oneself, depression, manic behaviour, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

38. RED VEINS IN THE EYES

'Red veins in the eyes' indicates visible veins on the sclera running horizontally from the corners of the eyes. In Western medicine this corresponds to an engorgement of the subconjunctival vessels.

Liver-Fire

Large red veins in the eyes running horizontally from the outer corner, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Small red veins in the eyes running horizontally from the outer corner, blurred vision, dry eyes, diminished night-vision, red eyes, floaters, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, scanty menstruation or heavy menstrual bleeding (if Empty Heat is severe), red cheek-bones, cramps, withered and brittle nails, very dry hair and skin, anxiety, a feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Red veins in the eyes running horizontally from the inner corner, red painful eyes, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Red veins in the eyes running horizontally from the inner corner, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, dry mouth and throat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Thin, red veins in the eyes, dry eyes, poor bone development in children, softening of the bones in adults, deafness, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower back ache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

39. DROOPING RED MEMBRANE

'Drooping Red Membrane' indicates a condition in which fine streaks of blood on the upper border of the pupil gradually grow into a red membrane that spreads downward, covering the pupil. In Western medicine, this corresponds to trachoma; the pathogen of this disease is carried by flies, and it is usually seen only in developing countries.

Liver-Fire

Fine blood streaks that become a membrane, often shaped like a half-moon, and cover the pupil; headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Lungs and Spleen

Small ulcers inside the upper eyelid that give rise to streaks of blood from the upper border of the pupil, painful and itchy eyes, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, dry stools, scanty-dark urine, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Wind-Heat affecting the Liver and Lung channels

Red eyes, fine streaks of blood over the eye, thickening of the eyelid, pain in the eye, sticky discharge in the

eye, streaming eyes, feeling of heat, slight thirst, yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

40. RED MEMBRANE IN THE CORNER OF THE EYE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

‘Red membrane in the corner of the eye’ indicates a condition in which a large red membrane, shaped like the wing of a fly, extends horizontally from the corner of the eyes towards the pupil, eventually covering the pupil. In Western medicine, this corresponds to pterygium, which consists of overgrowth of the cornea by the conjunctiva; this disease is usually seen only in hot and dry climates.

Liver-Fire

Membrane in the corner of the eye that looks like butter, later becoming dark red; pain in the eyes, dry eyes, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Red membrane in the corners of the eye, rather thick; pain in the eye, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Red membrane in the corners of the eyes running horizontally from the inner corner, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, dry mouth and throat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Lung channel

Red membrane in the corner of the eye extending horizontally towards the pupil, pain in the eye, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of

nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Red membrane in the corner of the eye with a small head, constipation, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, abdominal pain, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, dry stools, scanty-dark urine, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Pale red membrane in the corner of the eye, varying in thickness, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

41. RED RING AROUND THE PUPIL

In Western medicine, ‘red ring around the pupil’ corresponds to anterior uveitis or iritis, the main symptoms of which are photophobia, pain, redness, decreased vision, and lachrymation.

Liver-Fire

Red ring around the pupil, contracted pupil; pain in the eye aggravated by heat and alleviated by the application of cold; streaming eye, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Red ring around the pupil with yellow fluid flowing upwards; pain in the eye aggravated by heat and alleviated by the application of cold; streaming eyes, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, foul breath, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Qi deficiency with Internal Wind

Pale red ring around the pupil, eye not painful, chronic condition, eyelashes falling out, fine tremor of the hand, facial tic, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, shortness of breath, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

42. CORNEAL OPACITY

In Western medicine, corneal opacity may be caused by trauma, bacterial or viral infections, or systemic diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus erythematosus.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Corneal opacity over the pupil, red in colour, no pain or streaming of the eye, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Corneal opacity over the pupil, red in colour, streaming eyes, blurred vision, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Wind-Heat affecting the Liver channel

Corneal opacity over the pupil, bright white in colour, oozing of fluid, pain in the eye, streaming eyes, itchy eyes, headache, yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Toxic Heat

Corneal opacity over the pupil, grey or yellow in colour; fine granular nebulas in the pupil, greyish-white or yellowish in colour with indistinct borders, sinking in the centre, may cover the whole pupil, may be densely or sparsely distributed and may extend sharply, like tree branches, or mat together into patches so as to be covered by a yellow membrane that looks like fat; pain in the eye, eyes streaming with a thick fluid, feeling of heat, thirst, Red tongue with red point and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Deep-Rapid-Slippery pulse.

43. SCARRING AFTER CORNEAL OPACITY

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Scarring after corneal opacity, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Scarring after corneal opacity, pale red sclera, dry eyes, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Scarring after corneal opacity, red or dark yellow sclera, looking like an agate (a precious stone with multi-coloured stripes), abdominal distension and pain, headache, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

44. WHITE SPECKS

White specks may occur on the sclera or pupil and may be bright or dull white.

Phlegm obstructing the Lungs

Dull-white specks on the sclera and/or pupil, feeling of oppression in the chest, feeling of heaviness, dizziness, nausea, phlegm in the throat, cough with expectoration of sticky sputum, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dull-white specks on the sclera, dry eyes, blurred vision, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation

or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Yang deficiency with internal Cold

Bright-white specks on the sclera, feeling of cold, cold limbs, abdominal pain, loose stools, tiredness, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

45. WHITE MEMBRANE ON THE PUPIL IN CHILDREN

‘White membrane on the pupil in children’ is called *gan yi* in Chinese, which means Childhood Nutritional Impairment Nebula. It consists of a white membrane covering the pupil, often starting with the symptom of decreased vision at night. As its name implies, it occurs in children suffering from Nutritional Impairment. A nebula is a translucent, greyish corneal haze, scarring, or opacity.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

White membrane on the pupil, decreased vision at night, pain in the eye, flickering eyelids, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness, a sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency

White membrane on the pupil, frequent blinking, oozing of fluid, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Retention of Food

White membrane on the pupil, decreased vision at night, pain in the eye, thin body, fullness; pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting; nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippery pulse.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Greyish membrane on the pupil, decreased vision at night, uncomfortable sensation in the eye, dull in colour, corneal erosion, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

46. YELLOW FLUID BETWEEN THE PUPIL AND THE IRIS

In Western medicine, yellow fluid between the pupil and iris corresponds to hypopyon, which is a sterile pus formation in the anterior chamber (i.e. between the back of the cornea and the iris). Diseases such as pneumococcal keratitis or *Pseudomonas* keratitis could show this phenomenon.

Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Yellow fluid between the pupil and the iris streaming upwards, shaped like a crescent; pain in the eye with acute onset, photophobia, streaming eyes, sticky discharge from the eyes, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, foul breath, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Stomach and Spleen deficient and Cold

Yellow fluid between the pupil and the iris streaming upwards, uncomfortable sensation of the eye, chronic condition, discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium, better after eating and better with pressure or massage, no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods, vomiting of clear fluid, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion, slight abdominal distension after eating, loose stools, feeling cold, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen

Yellow fluid between the pupil and iris streaming upwards, eye ache, sticky discharge from the eyes, greasy

skin, sinus problems, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of fullness of the epigastrium, epigastric or abdominal pain, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness of the body, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

47. BLEEDING BETWEEN THE PUPIL AND THE IRIS

Liver-Fire

Bleeding between pupil and iris, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency and Blood deficiency

Bleeding between pupil and iris, uncomfortable sensation of the eyes, streaming eyes, red eyes, blurred vision, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Deficient Spleen-Qi not holding Blood

Bleeding between pupil and iris, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

48. STARING, FIXED EYES

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 6](#)

Heart-Fire

Staring, fixed eyes, pain in the eyes, palpitations, thirst, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Heat in the Heart

Staring, fixed eyes, protruding eyeballs, a feeling of muzziness of the head, palpitations, anxiety, insomnia, thirst, feeling of heat, feeling of oppression of the chest, manic behaviour, Red-Swollen tongue with redder tip, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

49. DILATED PUPILS

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dilated pupils, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Yin

Dilated pupil, uncomfortable sensation of the eye, floaters, blurred vision, tiredness, shortness of breath, weak and/or hoarse voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, loose stools, tongue Pale or normal-coloured without coating, Empty or Floating-Empty pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Dilated pupil, floaters, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Liver-Wind with Phlegm

Dilated pupil, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Collapse of Yang

Dilated pupils, profuse sweating, cyanosis of the lips, open eyes, open mouth, open fists, incontinence, Pale and Short tongue, Minute or Scattered pulse.

50. CONTRACTED PUPILS

Liver-Fire

Contracted pupils, blood-shot eyes, pain in the eyes, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Wind

Contracted pupils, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of the limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Blood stasis in the Connecting channels of the Brain (Eye System)

Contracted pupils, pain in the eyes, headache, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Toxic Heat at the Blood Level

Contracted pupils, mental confusion, tremor, macular rash, fever at night, Red tongue with red points and without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Contracted pupils, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of fullness of the epigastrium, epigastric or abdominal pain, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness of the body, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Contracted pupils with sudden onset, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

51. CLOSED EYES

'Closed Eyes' refers to the inability of the patient to keep the eyes open.

Excess of Yin

Closed eyes, cold limbs, open palms, Pale tongue, Deep-Full-Slow pulse.

Heat in febrile disease (Blood level)

Closed eyes, fever at night, macular rash, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

Wind-stroke (acute stage)

Closed eyes, unconsciousness, open palms, incontinence of urine, cold limbs, Pale and Short tongue, Deep-Full-Slow pulse.

52. OPEN EYES

'Open Eyes' refers to the inability of the patient to keep the eyes shut.

Wind-stroke (acute stage)

Open eyes, unconsciousness, closed palms, urinary retention, hot limbs, Red tongue, Rapid pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Open eyes, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

53. QUIVERING EYEBALL

This is called nystagmus in Western medicine.

Internal Wind (acute stage of Wind-stroke)

Quivering eyeballs, open eyes, unconsciousness, clenched fists, urinary retention, Red tongue, Rapid pulse.

Empty Wind from Blood deficiency

Quivering eyeballs, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Quivering eyeballs, poor bone development in children, softening of the bones in adults, deafness, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower back ache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Quivering eyeballs, irritability, abdominal distension and pain, alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, stools sometimes dry and bitty and sometimes loose, flatulence, tiredness, poor appetite, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

54. EYEBALL TURNING UP

The eyeball turning up is seen in acute conditions of internal Wind; it is also seen in chronic conditions, in which case the eyeball turns upwards slightly so that the white sclera can be seen under the eye.

Heat generating Wind (Blood level of the Four Levels)

Eyeballs turning up, eyes open, coma, tremor, macular rash, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

Stagnant Blood generating Wind

Eyeballs turning up, eyes open, mouth open, dribbling from the corners of the mouth, dark complexion,

headache, dark rings under eyes, chest pain, Purple and Deviated tongue, Wiry pulse.

Internal Wind

Eyeballs turning up, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of the limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Kidney deficiency

Eyeballs slightly turning up, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, exhaustion. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

55. INVERTED EYELASHES

Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Inverted eyelashes, no pain, itchy eyes, aggravated by over-exertion, tiredness, weak voice, shortness of breath, loose stools, poor appetite, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen

Inverted eyelashes, red and swollen eyelids, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, a feeling of fullness of the epigastrium, epigastric or abdominal pain, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness of the body, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Empty-Cold in the Bladder

Inverted eyelashes, feeling cold, cold legs, frequent, pale and abundant urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Inverted eyelashes, red and itchy eyes, tears flowing from the eyes, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

56. SUDDEN BLINDNESS

Liver-Fire

Sudden unilateral blindness, blood-shot eyes, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Blood stasis

Sudden unilateral blindness, pain in the eyes, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

Phlegm-Heat in the Liver

Sudden blindness, red face and eyes, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, tinnitus and/or deafness (with sudden onset), temporal headache, dizziness, thirst, bitter taste, dream-disturbed sleep, constipation with dry stools, dark-yellow urine, epistaxis, haematemesis, haemoptysis, a feeling of oppression of the chest, rattling sound in the throat, a feeling of muzziness of the head, expectoration of sputum, hypertension, Red tongue with redder sides, Swollen and with sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Heat in the Heart

Sudden blindness, red face, red eyes, palpitations, mental restlessness, thirst, red face, a feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, uncontrolled laughter or crying, shouting, muttering to oneself, depression, manic behaviour, Red tongue with

redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Wind

Sudden unilateral blindness, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Heat at the Blood level (within the Four Levels)

Sudden blindness, high fever at night, macular skin eruptions, mental confusion, coma, bleeding, Dark-Red and dry tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

57. CATARACT

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Cataract, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, discomfort in the epigastrium, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Cataract, tiredness, dry eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dizziness, tinnitus, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Cataract, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, slight anxiety, palpitations, insomnia, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Neck, Shoulders and Upper Back

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Girdle Vessel Pathology

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The following neck, shoulder, and upper back symptoms are discussed:

Neck and Shoulders

1. Stiff neck
2. Rigidity of the neck
3. Neck pain
4. Soft neck
5. Deviated neck
6. Wide neck
7. Thin neck
8. Swollen neck glands
9. Pulsation of the carotid artery
10. Shoulder ache
11. Frozen shoulder

Upper back

12. Upper backache
13. Cold upper back
14. Hot upper back
15. Stiffness of the back as if wearing a tight belt

NECK AND SHOULDERS

The following neck and shoulder symptoms are discussed:

1. Stiff neck
2. Rigidity of the neck
3. Neck pain
4. Soft neck
5. Deviated neck
6. Wide neck
7. Thin neck
8. Swollen neck glands
9. Pulsation of the carotid artery
10. Shoulder ache
11. Frozen shoulder

1. STIFF NECK

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

a) Full

Wind-Damp Painful Obstruction Syndrome

Stiff neck, body aches, feeling of heaviness of the body.

Acupuncture

T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-39 Xuanzhong, Juegu (extra point), BL-10 Tianzhu, G.B.-20 Fengchi.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Stiff neck when upper back muscles are tense, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

T.B.-5 Waiguan, T.B.-6 Zhigou, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, G.B.-39 Xuanzhong.

Liver-Yang rising

Stiff neck, tense upper back muscles, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan.

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Stiff neck with acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing, body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-11 Quchi, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Juegu (extra point).

b) Empty

Kidney deficiency

Slightly stiff neck, dizziness, tinnitus, lower backache. Other symptoms depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, Juegu (extra point), G.B.-39 Xuanzhong, BL-10 Tianzhu.

c) Other patterns

Liver-Wind

Stiff neck, headaches, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

2. RIGIDITY OF THE NECK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

a) Full

Cold Painful Obstruction Syndrome

Rigidity of the neck with acute onset that may continue for months, neckache that is aggravated by exposure to cold and damp weather and ameliorated by the application of heat.

Acupuncture

T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-39 Xuanzhong, Juegu (extra point), BL-10 Tianzhu, G.B.-20 Fengchi. Moxa is applicable

Liver-Qi stagnation

Rigidity of the neck that is aggravated by emotional upsets, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability,

moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

T.B.-5 Waiguan, T.B.-6 Zhigou, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, G.B.-39 Xuanzhong.

Liver-Yang rising

Rigidity of the neck, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan.

b) Other patterns

Liver-Wind

Rigidity of the neck, stiff neck, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, tics, tremor of limbs, Stiff, Moving or Deviated tongue, Wiry pulse.

3. NECK PAIN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 36](#)

a) Full

Wind-Damp Painful Obstruction Syndrome

Neck pain, stiff neck, body aches, feeling of heaviness of the body.

Acupuncture

T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-39 Xuanzhong, Juegu (extra point), BL-10 Tianzhu, G.B.-20 Fengchi.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Chronic neck ache, tense upper back muscles, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

T.B.-5 Waiguan, T.B.-6 Zhigou, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, G.B.-39 Xuanzhong.

Liver-Yang rising

Chronic neck ache, tense upper back muscles, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan.

Invasion of Wind

Neck pain, stiff neck, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, body aches, Floating pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-11 Quchi, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Juegu (extra point).

b) Other patterns

Liver-Wind

Neck pain, stiff neck, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

4. SOFT NECK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

'Soft neck' refers not only to a feeling of softness of the neck on palpation, but also to a subjective feeling of softness and weakness of the neck, as if the patient found it difficult to keep the head up.

Severe deficiency of Qi and Blood

Soft neck, exhaustion, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Soft neck, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

5. DEVIATED NECK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

'Deviated neck' indicates the leaning of the neck to one side.

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Deviated neck, poor constitution, poor bone development in children, softening of bones in adults, deafness, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower backache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if a Kidney-Essence deficiency against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Deviated neck, stiff neck, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

6. WIDE NECK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

Qi stagnation with Phlegm

Wide neck, feeling of a lump in the throat, irritability, phlegm in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, abdominal distension, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Phlegm with Blood stasis

Wide neck, feeling of a lump in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heaviness, dizziness, abdominal pain, chest pain, Purple and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Liver-Fire

Wide neck, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

7. THIN NECK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

Severe deficiency of Qi and Blood

Thin neck, exhaustion, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Severe Yin deficiency

Thin neck, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry throat, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

8. SWOLLEN NECK GLANDS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

a) Full

Invasion of Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat

Swollen neck glands with acute onset, swollen tonsils, sore throat, aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, ST-44 Neiting, ST-40 Fenglong.

Toxic Heat with Qi and Yin deficiency

Chronic, swollen neck glands that go up and down, sore throat that comes and goes, tiredness, breathlessness, weak voice, dry throat, loose stools, night-sweating, tongue without coating in the centre, Empty or Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan, ST-44 Neiting, ST-40 Fenglong, LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-3 Taixi.

b) Full-Empty

Residual Damp-Heat with Qi deficiency

Chronically swollen neck glands on and off, aggravated by periods of overwork and alleviated by periods of rest, chronic sore throat that comes and goes, a feeling of heaviness, muscle ache, tiredness, poor appetite, loose

stools, Pale tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Soggy pulse. This condition is very common in post-viral fatigue syndrome.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-44 Neiting, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai.

c) Other patterns

Toxic Heat with Blood stasis

Chronic, swollen neck glands, dark colour on the neck, dark complexion, chest pain, headache, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry-Rapid or Choppy-Rapid pulse.

9. PULSATION OF THE CAROTID ARTERY

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 10](#)

‘Pulsation of the carotid artery’ indicates an excessive pulsation of this artery that is clearly visible.

Kidney- and Heart-Yang deficiency with Water overflowing to the Heart

Pulsation of the carotid artery, oedema especially of the legs and ankles, cold feeling in legs and back, fullness and distension of abdomen, soreness of lower back, feeling cold, scanty-clear urination, palpitations, breathlessness, vomiting of white-watery-frothy fluid, cold hands, Pale and Swollen tongue with a wet-white coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Fine-Slippy pulse.

Chronic Phlegm in the Lungs

Pulsation of the carotid artery, sputum in the throat, wheezing, breathlessness, inability to lie down, feeling of oppression of the chest, cough with expectoration of profuse sputum, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippy pulse.

10. SHOULDER ACHE

Damp-Cold

Ache in the shoulder region that may extend to the scapula region, a feeling of heaviness, numbness, cold on palpation.

Wind-Cold

Acute pain in the shoulder joint that is aggravated by exposure to cold and application of heat, feeling cold.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Pain in the shoulder joint, rigidity of the shoulder, a feeling of distension, Purple tongue.

11. FROZEN SHOULDER

Cold

Severe pain in the shoulder joint that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by application of heat, inability to abduct the arm, feeling cold.

Damp-Cold

Severe pain in the shoulder joint that is aggravated by exposure to cold and dampness and alleviated by the application of heat, inability to abduct the arm, a feeling of heaviness and numbness of the arm, feeling cold.

Blood stasis

Severe pain in the shoulder joint that is worse at night, rigidity of the shoulder joint, Purple tongue.

UPPER BACK

The following upper back symptoms are discussed:

12. Upper backache
13. Cold upper back
14. Hot upper back
15. Stiffness of the back as if wearing a tight belt

12. UPPER BACKACHE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Upper backache, stiffness of the neck and top of the shoulders, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing, body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Upper backache that may be worse at night, rigidity of the neck, pain relieved by exercise and aggravated by rest, tense muscles, headache, abdominal distension and pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Damp-Cold

Severe pain in the upper back that is aggravated by exposure to cold and dampness and alleviated by the application of heat, a feeling of heaviness and numbness of the upper back, feeling cold.

Liver-Yang rising

Pain and stiffness of the upper back, stiff neck, tense muscles, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Pain and stiffness of the upper back, stiff neck, tense muscles, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of lump in the throat, premenstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

13. COLD UPPER BACK

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Feeling of cold of the upper back, stiff neck and shoulders, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing, body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Yang deficiency

Feeling of cold of the upper back, feeling cold in general, cold limbs, tiredness, depression, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

14. HOT UPPER BACK

Lung-Heat

Feeling of heat in the upper back, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency

Feeling of heat in the upper back that is worse at night, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with desire to drink in small sips, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

15. STIFFNESS OF THE BACK AS IF WEARING A TIGHT BELT

Girdle Vessel Pathology

Feeling of stiffness of the back and waist as if wearing a belt that is too tight, backache radiating horizontally to the front or abdominal pain radiating towards the back, feeling as if sitting in cold water, feeling of heaviness of the abdomen as if wearing a heavy money-belt (ancient texts describe this symptom as *feeling as if wearing a belt with 3000 coins*).

Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Feeling of stiffness of the back and waist as if wearing a belt that is too tight, a pricking feeling of the skin around the waist, cannot breathe deeply, fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium, bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

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Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Water overflowing the Heart

Feeling of stuffiness under the Heart

Heat

Cold

Phlegm

Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel

Phlegm-Fluids

Heart beat displaced downwards

Heart-Qi deficiency with Heart-Blood stasis

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Phlegm-Fluids obstructing the Heart

Toxic Heat invading the Heart

Heart beat displaced upwards

Kidney- and Heart-Yang deficiency with Water overflowing

Heart beat displaced to the left

Phlegm-Fluids in the chest and hypochondrium

Liver-Blood stasis with water overflowing

Heart beat displaced to the right

Heart-Qi deficiency with Heart-Blood stasis

Phlegm-Fluids in the chest and hypochondrium

Heart beat below the xyphoid process

Heart-Blood stasis

Heart-Qi deficiency

Protruding chest*Chronic Phlegm in the Lungs**Severe Liver-Qi stagnation**Liver-Blood stasis***Sunken chest***Lung-Qi deficiency**Lung-Yin deficiency**Kidney-Yang deficiency**Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency***Protruding sternum***Constitutional deficiency of Lungs and Kidneys**Phlegm in the Lungs***Chest sunken on one side***Lung-Yin deficiency**Phlegm-Fluids in the Lungs**Phlegm-Fluids in the Lungs with Blood stasis***Chest protruding on one side***Phlegm-Fluids in the Lungs**Severe Liver-Qi stagnation**Heart-Qi deficiency with Blood stasis***Gynaecomastia***Liver-Blood stasis**Damp-Heat in the Penetrating Vessel***Yawning***Liver-Qi stagnation**Lung-Qi stagnation**Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood**Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency***Sighing***Liver-Qi stagnation**Lung-Qi stagnation**Spleen- and Heart-Qi deficiency*

15. Heart beat displaced downwards
16. Heart beat displaced upwards
17. Heart beat displaced to the left
18. Heart beat displaced to the right
19. Heart beat below the xyphoid process
20. Protruding chest
21. Sunken chest
22. Protruding sternum
23. Chest sunken on one side
24. Chest protruding on one side
25. Gynaecomastia
26. Yawning
27. Sighing

1. ACUTE COUGH

Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 53](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

a) Full

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Acute cough with expectoration of white sputum, aversion to cold, fever, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-11 Quchi, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Acute cough with expectoration of yellow sputum, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, LU-5 Chize.

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Acute, barking cough following an invasion of external Wind with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum; shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, agitation,

The following chest symptoms are discussed:

1. Acute cough
2. Chronic cough
3. Coughing blood
4. Breathlessness
5. Wheezing
6. Chest pain
7. Pain in the ribs
8. Feeling of oppression of the chest
9. Feeling of distension of the chest
10. Feeling of heat of the chest
11. Heart feeling vexed
12. Palpitations
13. Palpitations under the heart
14. Feeling of stuffiness under the heart

Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Lung-Heat

Acute, barking cough following an invasion of external Wind, expectoration of scanty yellow sputum, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Residual dryness and Phlegm in the Lungs

Acute, dry cough after an invasion of Wind-Heat, difficult expectoration of scanty sputum after repeated bouts of dry coughing, persistent tickling sensation in the throat, dry throat, dry mouth, Swollen and dry tongue, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, LU-5 Chize, LU-1 Zhongfu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-3 Taixi.

b) Other patterns

Residual dryness in the Lungs

Acute, dry cough after an invasion of Wind-Heat, repeated bouts of dry coughing, persistent tickling sensation in the throat, dry throat, dry mouth, dry tongue.

Invasion of Wind-Dryness

Acute, dry cough, aversion to cold, fever, dry throat, tickly throat, dry nose, discomfort of the chest, thin-dry-white tongue coating, Floating pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

In my experience, coughs following acute upper respiratory infections are due either to Phlegm-Heat or Dryness with Phlegm. For the former, I use Qing Qi Hua Tan Tang and for the latter, Qing Zao Jiu Fei Tang.

2. CHRONIC COUGH

Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Full

Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Chronic cough with easy expectoration of profuse-white sputum, rattling sound in the throat, white-pasty complexion, a feeling of oppression in the chest, shortness of breath, dislike of lying down, wheezing, nausea, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-40 Fenglong.

Phlegm-Dryness in the Lungs

Chronic, dry cough with a weak sound and occasional, difficult expectoration of scanty sputum, shortness of breath, a feeling of oppression of the chest, dry throat, wheezing, pasty-dry complexion, Swollen tongue with a dry-sticky coating, Fine-Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-40 Fenglong, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-3 Taixi.

b) Empty

Lung-Yin deficiency

Chronic cough that is dry or with difficult expectoration of scanty sputum, weak and/or hoarse voice, dry mouth and throat, tickly throat, tiredness, dislike of speaking, thin body or thin chest, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating (or with rootless coating) in the front part, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat



Chronic cough that is dry or with difficult expectoration of scanty sputum that may be blood tinged, dry

mouth and throat at night, tickly throat, tiredness, dislike of speaking, thin body or thin chest, night-sweating, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LU-10 Yuji.

c) Other patterns

Lung-dryness

Chronic, dry cough, dry skin, dry throat, dry mouth, thirst, hoarse voice, dry tongue, Floating-Empty pulse.

Lung-Qi deficiency

Chronic, slight cough with a weak sound, slight shortness of breath, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs

Chronic cough with expectoration of white-watery sputum, aggravated by exposure to cold, feeling cold, cold hands, phlegm in the throat, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of cold of the chest, Swollen and wet tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs

Chronic, barking cough with a yellow or blood-tinged sputum, breathlessness, asthma, a feeling of fullness and distension of the chest and hypochondrium, headache, dizziness, red face, thirst, bitter taste, blood-shot eyes, scanty-dark urine, constipation, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry pulse.

Phlegm-Fluids in the Lungs

Chronic cough with expectoration of white-watery-frothy sputum, breathlessness, splashing sound in the chest, vomiting of white-watery-frothy sputum, feeling cold, cough that may be elicited by a scare, Pale tongue with thick-sticky-white coating, Fine-Slippery or Weak-Floating pulse.

3. COUGHING BLOOD

Lung-Heat

Cough with blood-tinged sputum, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Barking cough with expectoration of blood-tinged sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, agitation, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Dry cough with difficult expectoration of scanty, blood-tinged sputum, dry mouth and throat at night, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Cough with blood-tinged sputum, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Slight cough with expectoration of scanty, blood-tinged sputum, fresh-red blood, tiredness, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, weak voice, slight shortness of breath, spontaneous sweating, dislike of speaking, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Lung-Heat at the Blood level (Four Levels)

Coughing of blood, fever at night, macular skin eruptions, mental confusion, night-sweating, 5-palm heat,

dry throat, Red tongue with red points and without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

4. BREATHLESSNESS

Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 53](#)

The symptom of breathlessness comprises four slightly different symptoms. These are:

- Breathlessness (*Chuan*): severe difficulty in breathing with shortness of breath and raising of the shoulders
- Shortness of breath (*Duan Qi*): short, irregular, rapid breaths without pronounced struggling for breath, and raising of the shoulders as seen in Breathlessness
- Weak breathing (*Qi Shao*): weak, low, short breathing sounds
- Rebellious-Qi breathing (*Shang Qi*): rapid, short breaths, cough, a sensation of oppression of the throat, and a feeling of energy rising accompanied by a feeling of anxiety

a) Empty

Lung-Qi deficiency

Shortness of breath or weak breathing, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli.

Lung-Yin deficiency

Shortness of breath or weak breathing with difficulty in exhaling, cough that is dry or with scanty-sticky sputum, weak and/or hoarse voice, dry mouth and throat, tickly throat, tiredness, dislike of speaking, thin body or thin chest, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating (or with rootless coating) in the front part, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

b) Full

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Acute breathlessness, barking cough with expectoration of blood-tinged sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, agitation, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Breathlessness, wheezing, chronic cough coming in bouts with profuse white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate; white-pasty complexion, a feeling of oppression in the chest, dislike of lying down, wheezing, nausea, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

c) Other patterns

Kidneys not receiving Qi

Shortness of breath or weak breathing with difficulty in inhaling, rapid and weak breathing, difficulty in inhaling, chronic cough and/or asthma, spontaneous sweating, cold limbs, cold limbs after sweating, swelling of the face, thin body, mental listlessness, clear urination during asthma attack, soreness of the back, dizziness, tinnitus, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak-Tight pulse.

Lung-Qi stagnation

Shortness of breath, a feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, a feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, worry, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

Lung-Heat

Acute breathlessness, cough with expectoration of scanty-yellow sputum, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring

of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs

Breathlessness; chronic cough with expectoration of white-watery sputum that is aggravated by exposure to cold; feeling cold, cold hands, phlegm in the throat, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of cold of the chest, Swollen and wet tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Phlegm

Shortness of breath with difficulty in inhaling, cough with expectoration of white-watery sputum, feeling cold, cold feet, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, frequent-pale urination, Pale, Swollen and wet tongue, Weak and slightly Slippery pulse.

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Water overflowing to the Lungs



Severe breathlessness; oedema, especially of the legs and ankles; cold feeling in legs and back, fullness and distension of abdomen, soreness of lower back, feeling cold, scanty-clear urination, expectoration of thin-watery-frothy sputum, cough, Pale and Swollen tongue with a wet-white coating, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

Phlegm in the Lungs with Lung-Qi deficiency

Shortness of breath, chronic cough that is worse on exertion, scanty phlegm that is difficult to expectorate or dilute watery phlegm, spontaneous sweating, feeling cold, a feeling of oppression of the chest, weak voice, tongue Pale and slightly Swollen in the front, pulse Empty on the right-Front position and slightly Slippery.

Lung-Qi and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Slight shortness of breath, weak breathing; low, short breathing sounds; lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel



Slight shortness of breath; rapid, short breaths; cough, a feeling of tightness of the chest, palpitations, anxiety,

epigastric and abdominal fullness, painful periods, Firm pulse.

Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs



Shortness of breath; rapid, short breaths; chronic, barking cough with a yellow or blood-tinged sputum, asthma, a feeling of fullness and distension of the chest and hypochondrium, headache, dizziness, red face, thirst, bitter taste, blood-shot eyes, scanty-dark urine, constipation, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry pulse.

5. WHEEZING

a) Full

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Noisy wheezing, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, a feeling of heat, red face, greasy skin, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, expectoration of yellow sputum, dizziness, nausea, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Wheezing; chronic cough with expectoration of profuse, white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate; a feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, blurred vision, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, muzziness of the head, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Other patterns

Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs

Wheezing, cough with expectoration of white-watery sputum, feeling cold, cold hands and feet, nausea, vomiting, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, dull-white complexion, pale urine, Pale and

Swollen tongue with wet-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Lung-Yang deficiency with Phlegm

Slight wheezing, expectoration of white watery sputum, breathlessness, rattling sound in the throat; cold limbs, worse on exercise; pale face, sweating, feeling cold, propensity to catching colds, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak and slightly Slippery pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Phlegm

Slight wheezing, expectoration of scanty sputum, breathlessness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with desire to sip water, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

Lung-Qi deficiency with Phlegm

Chronic wheezing, shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, pale complexion, propensity to catching colds, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Pale and Swollen tongue, Soggy pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Phlegm

Slight, chronic wheezing, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale and Swollen tongue, Soggy pulse.

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Phlegm

Chronic wheezing, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

6. CHEST PAIN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

a) Full

Heart-Blood stasis

Stabbing or pricking chest pain that may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder;

palpitations, a feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of the lips and nails, cold hands, tongue entirely Purple or Purple only on the sides in the chest areas, Choppy or Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, Ren-17 Shanzhong, Ren-14 Jueque, BL-14 Jueyinshu.

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Chest pain, a feeling of oppression of the chest, shortness of breath, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, feeling of heat, red face, greasy skin, sputum in the throat, expectoration of yellow sputum, dizziness, nausea, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Other patterns

Heart-Yang deficiency

A feeling of discomfort or very slight pain of the chest, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, feeling cold, cold hands, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Heart-Yang deficiency with Phlegm

Dull chest pain, a feeling of oppression or tightness of the chest, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, feeling cold, cold hands, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale and Swollen tongue, Deep-Weak-Slippery pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Dull chest and hypochondrial distension and pain, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel

Dull chest pain, a feeling of tightness of the chest, palpitations, anxiety, a feeling of a lump in the throat, abdominal and umbilical fullness, epigastric fullness, irregular periods, painful periods, a feeling of energy rising in the

abdomen to the chest, a feeling of heat in the face, nausea, Firm pulse.

Lung-Qi stagnation

Slight chest pain, a feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, a feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder channels

Chest pain extending to the hypochondrium, a feeling of oppression and heaviness of the chest, bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

7. PAIN IN THE RIBS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

‘Pain in the ribs’ refers to pain on the lateral aspect of the rib cage above the hypochondrial area.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Pain in the ribs with a feeling of distension, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Blood stasis

Severe pain in the ribs, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, irregular periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, dry skin, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder

Pain in the ribs, feeling of oppression and heaviness in the ribs, bitter and sticky taste, burning on urination, excessive vaginal discharge, irritability, a feeling of

oppression of the chest, nausea, vomiting, dark urine, tongue with Red sides and sticky-yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

8. FEELING OF OPPRESSION OF THE CHEST

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

Please note that this particular feeling is sometimes described as a ‘feeling of tightness’ of the chest by many patients. In Chinese, it is the feeling of *men*, which I translate as ‘feeling of oppression’. The Chinese term has strong emotional overtones as the ideogram shows a heart squashed by a door.

Phlegm in the Lungs

A feeling of oppression of the chest, breathlessness, sputum in the throat, a feeling of heaviness, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Cold-Phlegm, Damp-Phlegm or Phlegm-Heat.

Lung-Qi stagnation

A feeling of oppression of the chest, slight chest pain, a feeling of tightness of the chest, a feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

Liver-Qi stagnation

A feeling of oppression and distension of the chest and hypochondrium, epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel

A feeling of oppression of the chest, dull chest pain, a feeling of tightness of the chest, a feeling of heat in the face, a feeling of a lump in the throat, palpitations, anxiety, nausea, slight breathlessness, epigastric fullness or stuffiness, umbilical and abdominal fullness, irregular and/or painful periods, a feeling of energy rising in the abdomen to the chest, Firm pulse.

Heart-Yang deficiency with Phlegm

A feeling of oppression or tightness of the chest, slight chest pain or discomfort, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, feeling cold, cold hands, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

'A feeling of oppression of the chest' is the translation of the Chinese term *men* which nearly always indicates that emotional problems are at the root of this symptom. P-6 Neiguan and ST-40 Fenglong used unilaterally and crossed over is a good combination for this symptom.

9. FEELING OF DISTENSION OF THE CHEST

Liver-Qi stagnation

Feeling of distension of the chest and hypochondrium, epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Lung-Qi stagnation

Feeling of distension, oppression or tightness of the chest, a feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

10. FEELING OF HEAT OF THE CHEST

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

Lung-Heat

A feeling of heat of the chest, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

A feeling of heat in the chest in the afternoon or evening, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum, dry mouth and throat at night, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

A feeling of heat of the chest, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

A feeling of heat of the chest that is worse in the evening, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, dry mouth and throat, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Residual heat in the Diaphragm

A feeling of heat in the chest, thirst, dry throat, irritability, restlessness; a feeling of fullness and stuffiness of the diaphragm and epigastrium, which feels soft on pressure; nausea, slight shortness of breath, tongue Red in the front, Deep-Rapid pulse. This is residual Heat following an invasion of Wind-Heat that later progressed to the Qi level.

11. HEART FEELING VEXED

The term 'Heart feeling vexed' (called *xin zhong ao nong*) includes a feeling of anxiety and mental restlessness with heat, a slight feeling of oppression and uneasiness of the chest, and a feeling of constriction between the heart and the diaphragm.

a) Full

Heart-Fire

Heart feeling vexed, a feeling of tightness of the chest, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental

restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, Du-24 Shenting, Ren-15 Jiuwei.

Phlegm-Heat in the Heart

Heart feeling vexed, palpitations, mental restlessness, thirst, red face, a feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of phlegm, sputum in the throat, bitter taste, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, uncontrolled laughter or crying, shouting, depression, manic behaviour, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-dry-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, Du-24 Shenting, Ren-15 Jiuwei, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Full/Empty

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Heart feeling vexed, a slight feeling of emptiness of the chest, anxiety, mental restlessness, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, dry mouth and throat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, Du-24 Shenting, Ren-15 Jiuwei, HE-7 Shenmen, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

c) Other patterns

Qi and Yin deficiency of the Heart

Heart feeling vexed, a slight feeling of tightness of the chest, slight anxiety, palpitations, sweating, slight shortness of breath, dry throat, dry mouth, insomnia, tongue without coating, Weak pulse.

Residual Heat in the Diaphragm

Heart feeling vexed, a feeling of heat in the chest, thirst, dry throat, irritability, restlessness; a feeling of fullness

and stuffiness of the diaphragm and epigastrium, which feels soft on pressure; nausea, slight shortness of breath, tongue Red in the front, Deep-Rapid pulse. This is residual Heat following an invasion of Wind-Heat that later progressed to the Qi level.

12. PALPITATIONS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

'Palpitations' indicates a subjective sensation of the patient, who is aware of the heart beating and may have the impression that it is fast or irregular. This is a subjective sensation, and the pulse may in fact be neither rapid nor irregular. 'Palpitations' should therefore not be confused or identified either with the Western symptom of tachycardia or bradycardia (which refers to the objective rapidity or slowness of the pulse, respectively) or with arrhythmia. Palpitations are a symptom that may appear in any Heart pattern (see the Heart patterns in [Chapter 91](#)). There are three more conditions which may cause palpitations.

Shock affecting the Heart

Palpitations after a shock, anxiety, agitation, restless sleep, Moving pulse.

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Water overflowing to the Heart

Palpitations, oedema especially of the legs and ankles, cold feeling in legs and back, fullness and distension of the abdomen, soreness of lower back, feeling cold, scanty-clear urination, breathlessness, cold hands, Pale and Swollen tongue with a wet-white coating, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

Rebellious-Qi in the Penetrating Vessel affecting the Heart

Severe palpitations, anxiety, feeling of energy rising from the abdomen to the chest, feeling of heat in the face, a feeling of a lump in the throat, a feeling of tightness of the chest, nausea, slight breathlessness, epigastric fullness or stuffiness, umbilical and abdominal fullness, irregular and/or painful periods, Firm pulse.

13. PALPITATIONS UNDER THE HEART

The term 'palpitations under the heart' indicates a feeling of pulsation in the epigastrium or the area between the heart and epigastrium. Western patients may express this symptom in different ways, such as 'a feeling of pulsation in the stomach', 'butterflies in the stomach', 'a jumping feeling in the stomach' or 'a feeling of anxiety in the stomach'.

Heart-Yang deficiency

Slight palpitations under the heart, desire to press or massage the area between the heart and the stomach, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, a slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, feeling cold, cold hands, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight palpitations under the heart, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, dry mouth and throat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Severe palpitations under the heart, a feeling of oppression of the chest, mental restlessness, thirst, red face, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, uncontrolled laughter or crying, shouting, muttering to oneself, depression, manic behaviour, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel

Palpitations under the heart, feeling of heat in the face, feeling of a lump in the throat, anxiety, a feeling of

tightness of the chest, nausea, slight breathlessness, epigastric fullness or stuffiness, umbilical and abdominal fullness, irregular and/or painful periods, a feeling of energy rising in the abdomen to the chest, Firm pulse.

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Water overflowing to the Heart

Slight palpitations under the heart; oedema, especially of the legs and ankles; cold feeling in legs and back, Fullness and distension of the abdomen, soreness of lower back, feeling cold, scanty-clear urination, palpitations, breathlessness, cold hands, Pale and Swollen tongue with a wet-white coating, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

14. FEELING OF STUFFINESS UNDER THE HEART

'A feeling of stuffiness' indicates a subjective feeling of fullness or oppression of a certain area of the body that, however, feels soft on palpation. It is a translation of the Chinese term *pi*.

Heat

A feeling of stuffiness under the heart, a feeling of heat, palpitations, thirst, nausea, dark urine, Red tongue with yellow tongue coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved which may be the Heart or Lungs.

Cold

A feeling of stuffiness under the heart, feeling cold, cold limbs, white tongue coating, Tight pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved which may be the Lungs or Stomach.

Phlegm

A feeling of stuffiness under the heart, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, blurred vision, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved which may be the Lungs, Heart or Stomach and on the type of Phlegm.

Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel

A feeling of stuffiness under the heart, palpitations under the heart, feeling of heat in the face, a feeling of a lump in the throat, anxiety, a feeling of tightness of the chest, nausea, slight breathlessness, epigastric fullness or stuffiness, umbilical and abdominal fullness, irregular and/or painful periods, a feeling of energy rising in the abdomen to the chest, Firm pulse.

Phlegm-Fluids

A feeling of stuffiness under the heart, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting or watery fluids, dry mouth without a desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Slippery pulse.

15. HEART BEAT DISPLACED DOWNWARDS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 13](#)

Heart-Qi deficiency with Heart-Blood stasis

Heart beat displaced downwards, exhaustion, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, chest pain, purple lips, Bluish-Purple tongue, Choppy pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Heart beat displaced downwards, palpitations, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, nocturnal emissions, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, delayed cycle, infertility, tongue normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Phlegm-Fluids obstructing the Heart

Heart beat displaced downwards, palpitations, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting or watery

fluids, dry mouth without a desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Slippery pulse.

Toxic Heat invading the Heart

Heart beat displaced downwards, palpitations, feeling of oppression of the chest, breathlessness, mental restlessness, fever, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

16. HEART BEAT DISPLACED UPWARDS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 13](#)

Kidney- and Heart-Yang deficiency with Water overflowing

Heart beat displaced upwards; oedema, especially of the legs and ankles; cold feeling in legs and back, fullness and distension of abdomen, soreness of lower back, feeling cold, scanty-clear urination, palpitations, breathlessness, cold hands, Pale and Swollen tongue with a wet-white coating, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

17. HEART BEAT DISPLACED TO THE LEFT

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 13](#)

Phlegm-Fluids in the chest and hypochondrium

Heart beat displaced to the left, hypochondrial pain that is worse on coughing and breathing, a feeling of distension and pulling of the hypochondrium, shortness of breath, cough with expectoration of white, watery sputum, breathlessness, oedema, dizziness, hypochondrial pain, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Slippery-Wiry pulse.

Liver-Blood stasis with Water overflowing

Heart beat displaced to the left, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood

dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, oedema of the abdomen, Purple and Swollen tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

18. HEART BEAT DISPLACED TO THE RIGHT

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 13](#)

Heart-Qi deficiency with Heart-Blood stasis

Heart beat displaced to the right, exhaustion, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, spontaneous sweating, stabbing or pricking chest pain that may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder, a feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of the lips and nails, cold hands, tongue entirely Purple or Purple only on the sides in the chest areas, Choppy pulse.

Phlegm-Fluids in the chest and hypochondrium

Heart beat displaced to the right, hypochondrial pain that is worse on coughing and breathing, a feeling of distension and pulling of the hypochondrium, shortness of breath, cough with expectoration of white, watery sputum, breathlessness, oedema, dizziness, hypochondrial pain, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Slippery-Wiry pulse.

19. HEART BEAT BELOW THE XYPHOID PROCESS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 13](#)

Heart-Blood stasis

Heart beat below the xiphoid process, palpitations, stabbing or pricking chest pain that may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder, a feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of the lips and nails, cold hands, tongue entirely Purple or Purple only on the sides in the chest areas, Choppy or Wiry pulse.

Heart-Qi deficiency

Heart beat below the xiphoid process, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

20. PROTRUDING CHEST

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

Chronic Phlegm in the Lungs

Protruding chest, feeling of oppression of the chest, cough with expectoration of profuse sputum, breathlessness, sputum in the throat, wheezing, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Severe Liver-Qi stagnation

Protruding chest, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Blood stasis

Protruding chest, chest pain, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

21. SUNKEN CHEST

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

Lung-Qi deficiency

Sunken chest, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency

Sunken chest, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with desire to sip water, hoarse voice, night-sweating,

tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Sunken chest, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Sunken chest, dry cough that is worse in the evening, dry throat and mouth, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower back ache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

22. PROTRUDING STERNUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

Constitutional deficiency of Lungs and Kidneys

Protruding sternum, poor constitution, propensity to catching colds, lower backache, a history of repeated chest infections during childhood. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Yin or Yang deficiency.

Phlegm in the Lungs

Protruding sternum, feeling of oppression of the chest, cough with expectoration of profuse sputum, sputum in the throat, breathlessness, wheezing, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

23. CHEST SUNKEN ON ONE SIDE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

Lung-Yin deficiency

Chest sunken on one side, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with desire to sip water, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

Phlegm-Fluids in the Lungs

Chest sunken on one side, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting or watery fluids, dry mouth without a desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Slippery pulse.

Phlegm-Fluids in the Lungs with Blood stasis

Chest sunken on one side, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting or watery fluids, dry mouth without a desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, purple lips, chest pain, Purple and Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery or Wiry pulse.

24. CHEST PROTRUDING ON ONE SIDE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

Phlegm-Fluids in the Lungs

Chest protruding on one side, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting or watery fluids, dry mouth without desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Slippery pulse.

Severe Liver-Qi stagnation

Chest protruding on one side, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Heart-Qi deficiency with Blood stasis

Chest protruding on one side, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, chest pain, purple lips, cold hands, tongue Purple on the sides towards the front, Choppy pulse.

25. GYNAECOMASTIA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

Gynaecomastia indicates a swelling of the breasts in males.

Liver-Blood stasis

Gynaecomastia, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, vomiting of blood, epistaxis, painful periods, irregular periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, infertility, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, dry skin (only in severe cases), purple petechiae, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Penetrating vessel

Gynaecomastia, abdominal fullness and pain, pain in the testicles, turbid urine, tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

26. YAWNING

Yawning is only considered a symptom if it occurs very frequently; yawning when one is sleepy and tired is normal.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Frequent yawning, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Lung-Qi stagnation

Frequent yawning, a feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, a feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Frequent yawning, a feeling of tightness of the chest, chest pain, abdominal distension, palpitations, agitation, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Frequent yawning, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

27. SIGHING

Liver-Qi stagnation

Bouts of sighing preceded by emotional problems, long sighs, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Lung-Qi stagnation

Short sighs, a feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, a feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

Spleen- and Heart-Qi deficiency

Short sighs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, spontaneous sweating, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

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Limbs

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Other patterns

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Full

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Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

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The following limb symptoms will be discussed:

1. Muscle ache in the limbs
2. Pain in the limbs
3. Cold hands and feet
4. Hot hands and feet
5. Numbness/tingling of the limbs
6. Weakness of the limbs
7. Feeling of heaviness of the limbs
8. Atrophy of the limbs
9. Flaccidity of the limbs
10. Oedema of the limbs
11. Swelling of the joints of the limbs
12. Rigidity of limbs
13. Paralysis of the limbs
14. Contraction of limbs
15. Feeling of distension of the limbs
16. Tremor or spasticity of limbs
17. Convulsions of the limbs

1. MUSCLE ACHE IN THE LIMBS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Full

Dampness in the muscles

Muscle ache, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, feeling of heaviness in general, lassitude, sleepiness, epigastric fullness, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether Dampness is associated with Cold or Heat.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-31 Biguan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Distending muscle ache, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.34 Yanglingquan, Ren-6 Qihai.

b) Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull muscle ache that is aggravated by physical exertion, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

c) Other patterns

Phlegm-Heat in the muscles

Muscle ache, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, numbness or tingling of the limbs, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, thirst without desire to drink, Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Dampness is by far the most common cause of muscle ache. This is a common symptom in post-viral fatigue syndrome.

2. PAIN IN THE LIMBS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Full

Wind

Wandering pain in the joints that may come and go, especially in the upper part of the body. This pattern is Wind Painful Obstruction Syndrome and, in acute cases, the pulse is Floating.

Acupuncture

BL-12 Fengmen, G.B.-31 Fengshi, G.B.-39 Xuanzhong, Du-14 Dazhui, T.B.-6 Zhigou, BL-17 Geshu.

Cold

Pain in the joints that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by application of heat, usually in one joint only, cold limbs. This is Cold Painful Obstruction Syndrome and, in acute cases, the pulse is Tight.

Acupuncture

ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-6 Qihai, S.I.-5 Yanggu, BL-10 Tianzhu, Du-14 Dazhui, Du-3 Yaoyangguan, BL-23 Shenshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan. In this case, one uses the reinforcing method and moxa.

Dampness

Pain in the joints with swelling, a feeling of heaviness, numbness of the limbs. This is Damp Painful Obstruction Syndrome and, in acute cases, the pulse is Slippery.

Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, ST-36 Zusanli, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Empty**Qi and Blood deficiency**

Chronic, dull ache in the joints that is aggravated when tired and alleviated by rest, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu.

Liver and Kidney deficiency

Dull ache in the joints especially in the lower part of the body, weak knees, dizziness, lower backache, tinnitus. Other clinical manifestations, including those of the tongue and pulse, depend on whether there is Yin or Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi, BL-23 Shenshu.

c) Other patterns**Damp-Heat**

Pain in the joints with swelling and redness, hot to the touch, a feeling of heaviness and numbness of the limbs, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

3. COLD HANDS AND FEET

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Empty**Yang deficiency**

Cold hands and feet, the cold feeling extending to arms and legs; feeling cold in general, bright-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. These are the symptoms of a general Yang deficiency; other manifestations depend on the organ involved, which may be the Heart, Lungs, Spleen, or Kidneys.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-6 Qihai. Moxa. Other points depend on the organ involved.

Blood deficiency

Cold hands and feet, numbness and tingling of limbs, blurred vision, dizziness, insomnia, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. This pattern is much more common in women, and it may be due either to Liver-Blood or Heart-Blood deficiency.

Acupuncture

- LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan (Liver-Blood deficiency). Moxa.
- HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao (Heart-Blood deficiency). Moxa.

b) Full**Qi stagnation**

Cold hands and feet, especially fingers and toes, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness,

a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou.

c) Other patterns

Phlegm

Cold hands and feet, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, numbness and tingling of the limbs, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

Heat stagnating in the Interior (True Heat – False Cold)

Cold hands and feet, dark face, bright eyes with lustre, red-dry lips, irritability, strong body, breathing noisy, loud voice, thirst with desire to drink cold fluids, scanty-dark urine, constipation, burning sensation in anus, limbs cold, chest hot, a feeling of heat of the face, red face, mental restlessness, thirst, Red tongue, Rapid pulse. This pattern is quite rare; the cold hands and feet are due to Heat stagnating in the Interior and preventing Qi from reaching the extremities.



CLINICAL NOTE

Cold hands and feet are a reliable indication of Yang deficiency or Cold. In women, do not be surprised if this symptom is accompanied by a feeling of heat of the face.

4. HOT HANDS AND FEET

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Damp-Heat

Hot hands and feet, sweating of hands and feet; swollen, red, and hot joints of the hands and feet; a feeling of heaviness and numbness of the limbs, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Hot hands and feet, hot palms and soles, palpitations, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep,

anxiety, poor memory, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip and a Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach-Heat

Hot hands and feet, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Hot hands and feet worse in the afternoon, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, dry stools, dry mouth and throat especially in the afternoon, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, feeling of hunger but no desire to eat, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

5. NUMBNESS/TINGLING OF THE LIMBS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency

Tingling and weakness of the limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-31 Biguan.

b) Full

Phlegm in the limbs

Numbness of the limbs, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, tendency to obesity, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-40 Fenglong, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

Dampness

Numbness of the limbs, especially legs; pain in the joints with swelling, muscle ache, a feeling of heaviness, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

c) Other patterns**Wind-Phlegm**

Numbness of the limbs, especially the upper limbs, often unilateral; a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, tremor, dizziness, headache, Swollen and Stiff tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Liver-Wind

Numbness of the limbs, especially the upper limbs; often unilateral, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Damp-Heat

Numbness of the limbs especially the lower limbs, ache, redness, heat and swelling of the joints, muscle ache, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Qi stagnation and Blood stasis

Numbness or tingling of the limbs, stiffness and pain of the limbs, dark complexion, Purple tongue.

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Numbness or tingling of the limbs, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing, body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

Numbness is more indicative of Phlegm or Wind, whereas tingling is more indicative of a deficiency of Blood.

6. WEAKNESS OF THE LIMBS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Stomach-Qi deficiency

Weakness of the four limbs, especially the legs; uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness, especially in the morning, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Weakness of all limbs, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Weakness of limbs, especially the legs; weak knees, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

7. FEELING OF HEAVINESS OF THE LIMBS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Full**Dampness**

Feeling of heaviness of the limbs, especially the legs; numbness, swelling of the legs, feeling of heaviness in general, epigastric fullness, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-31 Biguan.

Damp-Heat

Feeling of heaviness of the limbs, especially the legs; swelling of the legs, hot feet, muscle ache, numbness,

epigastric fullness, sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-31 Biguan, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Phlegm in the limbs

Feeling of heaviness of the limbs, numbness of the limbs, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-31 Biguan, ST-40 Fenglong.

b) Full/Empty

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Slight feeling of heaviness of the limbs, especially of the legs; weakness of the limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, abdominal fullness, a sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-31 Biguan, BL-20 Pishu.

c) Other patterns

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Dampness

Slight feeling of heaviness of the limbs, especially the legs; weak and cold knees, lower backache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale and wet tongue with a sticky coating, Deep-Weak and slightly Slippery pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Slight feeling of heaviness of the limbs, weakness of the limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension

after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, abdominal fullness, a sticky taste, uncomfortable sensation in the epigastrium, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

A feeling of heaviness of the limbs is a very reliable symptom of Dampness in the lower part of the body.

8. ATROPHY OF THE LIMBS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Atrophy or thinning of the muscles of the four limbs, weakness of the limbs, muscular weakness, gait like a duck, feet turning in or out, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. In children this corresponds to the sequelae stage of poliomyelitis.

b) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Atrophy or thinning of the muscles, especially of the legs, weak knees, staggering gait, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, tongue normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. This pattern is more common in the elderly.

c) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Atrophy or thinning of the muscles, muscular weakness, cold limbs, cold knees, weak legs, sensation of cold in the back, oedema of the lower legs, lower backache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, early-morning diarrhoea, chronic diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Atrophy or thinning of the muscles, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

e) Kidney-Essence deficiency

Atrophy or thinning of the muscles; late development in children – hands cannot grasp, cannot put feet down, slow mental development. This pattern occurs only in children or babies and is often associated with the Five Retardations (slow development in children involving standing, walking, teeth development, hair development, and speech) and the Five Flaccidities (late closure of the fontanelles; flaccidity of the mouth, hands, feet, and muscles).

9. FLACCIDITY OF THE LIMBS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Flaccidity of the four limbs, cold and weak limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Flaccidity of the four limbs, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Flaccidity of the four limbs, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Qi deficiency with Blood stasis

Flaccidity of the four limbs in children, pain in the limbs, especially at night; listlessness, poor appetite, propensity to catching colds, weak voice, shortness of breath, loose stools, Bluish-Purple tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

e) Heat at the Nutritive-Qi level

Flaccidity of the four limbs with acute onset, fever at night, mental confusion, delirium, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

10. OEDEMA OF LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 65, 66, and 68](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 18 and 19](#)

a) Empty

Spleen-Yang deficiency

Pitting oedema of the limbs and abdomen, cold limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, feeling cold, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu. Moxa.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pitting oedema of ankles and legs, weak knees, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

b) Full

Dampness

Swelling of legs and ankles, ache, swelling, redness and heat of the joints, hot limbs, sticky-yellow tongue coating,

Slippery-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Qi Stagnation

Non-pitting oedema of the limbs, a feeling of distension of the limbs, the skin springs back on pressing the swollen area.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong.

c) Other patterns

Lung-Qi deficiency

Pitting oedema of hands and face, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Cold-Dampness

Swelling of legs and ankles, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, cold limbs, ache in the joints, feeling cold, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Qi deficiency and Blood stasis

Oedema of the limbs, cold hands and feet, numbness of the limbs, muscular weakness, purple colour of hands and/or feet, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, Bluish-Purple tongue, Choppy pulse.

Wind-Water invading the Lungs

Sudden swelling of the eyes, face, and hands that gradually spreads to the whole body; bright-shiny complexion, scanty and pale urination, aversion to wind, fever, cough, slight breathlessness, sticky-white tongue coating, Floating-Slippery pulse. This is an acute type of oedema, and this pattern is a type of external Wind-Cold.

11. SWELLING OF THE JOINTS OF LIMBS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

a) Damp Painful Obstruction (Bi) syndrome

Swelling and pain of the joints, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs and the body. In case of Damp-Heat, in addition to the above symptoms, the joints would be also red and hot to the touch.

b) Phlegm in the joints

Long-term, chronic swelling and deformities of joints, osteophytes, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs and body, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

12. RIGIDITY OF LIMBS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

a) Wind in the joints

Stiffness of the limbs, difficulty in extending the limbs, pain in the joints. This pattern corresponds to Wandering Painful Obstruction Syndrome.

b) Qi stagnation and Blood stasis

Rigidity of limbs, pain in the muscles and joints, inability to bend arms, abdominal distension, irritability, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Liver-Yang rising

Rigidity of the upper limbs, tense upper back muscles, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Rigidity of the lower limbs, thin limbs, weak knees, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

e) Liver-Wind

Rigidity of the upper limbs, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of the limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

f) Wind-Phlegm

Rigidity of the limbs, numbness or tingling of the limbs, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

13. PARALYSIS OF THE LIMBS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Paralysis of the four limbs, weak and cold limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Paralysis of the four limbs, weak limbs, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

c) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Paralysis of the four limbs, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Internal Wind

Tremor or spasms of the limbs, weak limbs, weak knees, numbness or tingling of the limbs, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured Deviated or Moving tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and slightly Wiry pulse.

e) Retention of Dampness in the muscles

Paralysis of the four limbs, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, swelling of the limbs and joints, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the body, sticky taste, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

f) Liver-Blood stasis

Paralysis of the four limbs, pain in the limbs that may be worse at night, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

g) Wind and Phlegm in the channels

Hemiplegia, numbness or tingling of the limbs (usually unilateral), sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen and Deviated tongue, Slippery and Wiry pulse. This corresponds to the sequelae stage of Wind-Stroke.

14. CONTRACTION OF LIMBS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Contraction and numbness of the limbs, weak muscles, tingling of the limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Contraction of lower limbs, thin limbs, weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Cold-Dampness

Contraction and swelling of the limbs, cold limbs, ache in the joints, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, feeling cold, white-sticky tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

d) Internal Wind

Contraction of the upper limbs, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of the limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

e) Invasion of Wind-Cold

Contraction of upper limbs, aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

f) Phlegm

Contraction of the limbs, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, numbness or tingling of the limbs, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

g) Blood stasis

Contraction of the limbs, pain of the limbs, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

15. FEELING OF DISTENSION OF THE LIMBS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Qi stagnation with Dampness

Feeling of distension of the limbs, swelling of the skin, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, sticky tongue coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

b) Blood stasis from Qi deficiency

Feeling of distension of the limbs, aggravated by over-exertion, pain in the limbs, purple colour of the lower legs, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, shortness of breath, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

c) Wind-Phlegm

Feeling of distension of the limbs, numbness or tingling of the limbs, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

16. TREMOR OR SPASTICITY OF LIMBS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 66](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 4 and 18](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Liver-Wind

Pronounced tremor of the limbs, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of the limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Wind-Phlegm

Tremor of the limbs, severe dizziness, blurred vision, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

c) Liver-Blood or -Yin deficiency leading to Empty Wind

Mild tremor of the limbs, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, numbness and/or tingling of a limb, dry eyes. The tongue and pulse

presentation depends on whether there is Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency.

d) Heat generating Wind

Tremor of the limbs, convulsions, twitching of the limbs, high fever, fainting, rigidity of the neck, opisthotonos, macular rash, eyeballs turning up, clenching of teeth, Dark-Red tongue without coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse. This is an acute pattern that occurs during a febrile disease, and it corresponds to the Blood level within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels.

18. CONVULSIONS OF THE LIMBS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

a) Liver-Yang rising generating Liver-Wind

Convulsions of the four limbs, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of the limbs, tics, headache, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Liver-Blood deficiency leading to Liver-Wind

Slight convulsions or twitching of the four limbs, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, facial tics, dull-pale complexion, Pale and Stiff tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

c) Liver-Wind and Phlegm

Convulsions of the four limbs, facial tic, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, severe dizziness, blurred

vision, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency and Liver-Blood deficiency giving rise to Liver-Wind

Slight convulsions of the four limbs, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, floaters, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion with red cheekbones, normal-coloured or Pale tongue without coating, Choppy, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse. This pattern usually occurs during pregnancy or after childbirth.

e) Heat victorious stirring Wind (Blood Level)

Convulsions of the four limbs with acute onset, tremor of limbs, twitching of limbs, high fever, fainting, rigidity of the neck, opisthotonos, macular rash, eyeballs turning up, clenching of teeth, Dark-Red tongue without coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

f) Yin deficiency generating Empty Wind (Blood Level)

Slight convulsions or twitching of the four limbs with acute onset, low-grade fever, tremor of the limbs, loss of weight, malar flush, listlessness, Dark-Red tongue without coating and Dry, Fine-Rapid pulse.

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*Liver-Wind**Wind-Phlegm**Cold-Dampness**Liver-Qi stagnation**Invasion of external Wind-Cold***Spoon-shaped fingers***Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs**Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs**Lung and Kidney-Yin deficiency***Thin, pointed fingers***Cold-Dampness in the Stomach**Damp-Heat in the Stomach**Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency***Cracked fingers***Liver-Blood deficiency**Liver-Blood stasis**Yang deficiency with Empty-Cold***Tinea (ring worm)***External invasion of Wind-Heat**External invasion of Damp-Heat**Toxic Heat in the skin***Thickened fingers***Deficiency of Qi and Blood***Shriveled and wrinkled fingers***Loss of fluids***Dry, cracked, and peeling palms***Blood deficiency**Blood deficiency with Wind***Venules on the thenar eminence***Cold in the Stomach**Stomach Deficient and Cold**Full Heat**Empty Heat**Blood stasis in the Stomach**Damp-Heat in the Stomach***Atrophy of the thenar eminence***Liver-Blood deficiency**Kidney-Yin deficiency**Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency***Atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum of the hands***Liver-Blood deficiency**Kidney-Yin deficiency**Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency***Ridged nails***Liver-Blood deficiency**Liver-Yin deficiency***Thickening of the nails***Liver-Fire**Liver-Blood stasis**Phlegm***Coarse and thick nails***Qi and Blood deficiency with dryness of Blood generating Wind***Cracked nails***Qi and Blood deficiency with dryness of Blood**Yin deficiency**Liver-Blood stasis***Nails falling off***Toxic Heat in the Liver***Indented nails***Liver-Blood deficient and dry**Deficiency of Qi and Blood**Heat injuring fluids***Thin and brittle nails***Qi and Blood deficiency**Liver-Yin deficiency**Liver-Blood stasis**Phlegm in the joints**Kidney-Essence deficiency***Withered and brittle nails***Liver- Blood deficiency**Liver-Yin deficiency**Liver-Blood stasis**Liver-Fire**Kidney-Yin deficiency**Phlegm**Blood Dryness and Empty Heat in acute febrile diseases***Withered and thickened nails***Severe Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency**Liver-Blood deficient and dry**Liver-Yin deficiency**Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat***Curling nails***Qi and Blood deficiency with Blood stasis***Flaking nails***Spleen and Kidney deficiency with Dampness***Twisted nails***Liver-Blood deficiency***Nails with white spots***Qi deficiency***Pale-white nails***Liver- and Spleen-Blood deficiency***Dull-white nails***Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency**Loss of fluids***Red nails***Full Heat***Yellow nails***Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen**Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder**Phlegm***Bluish-greenish nails***Liver-Blood deficiency with internal Cold**Severe Spleen-Qi deficiency with internal Wind (children)**Liver-Blood stasis*

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32. Thin and brittle nails
33. Withered and brittle nails
34. Withered and thickened nails
35. Curling nails
36. Flaking nails
37. Twisted nails
38. Nails with white spots
39. Pale-white nails
40. Dull-white nails
41. Red nails
42. Yellow nails
43. Bluish-greenish nails
44. Dark nails
45. Purple nails
46. Small or absent lunulae
47. Large lunulae

The following arm symptoms will be discussed:

1. Pain in the elbow
2. Cold hands
3. Hot hands
4. Pale hands
5. Red dorsum of the hands
6. Red palms
7. Sweaty palms
8. Pain in the hands
9. Itchy hands
10. Numbness/tingling of the hands
11. Tremor of the hands
12. Oedema of the hands
13. Swollen fingers
14. Deformed knuckles
15. Contraction of fingers
16. Spoon-shaped fingers
17. Thin, pointed fingers
18. Cracked fingers
19. Tinea (ring worm)
20. Thickened fingers
21. Shriveled and wrinkled fingers
22. Dry, cracked, and peeling palms
23. Venules on the thenar eminence
24. Atrophy of the thenar eminence
25. Atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum of the hand
26. Ridged nails
27. Thickening of the nails
28. Coarse and thick nails
29. Cracked nails
30. Nails falling off
31. Indented nails

1. PAIN IN THE ELBOW

a) Full

Invasion of Cold-Dampness

Unilateral pain in the elbow that is aggravated by exposure to cold and dampness and alleviated by the application of heat; swelling of the joint, feeling of heaviness and numbness of the arm.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-10 Shousanli, L.I.-1 Shangyang, T.B.-5 Waiguan, extra point Chu Yang Wei (with the elbow bent, the point is just behind the end of the elbow crease).

b) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Unilateral pain in the elbow that is aggravated by rest and slightly ameliorated by movement. This is usually due to repetitive strain injury.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-10 Shousanli, L.I.-1 Shangyang, T.B.-5 Waiguan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, extra point Chu Yang Wei (with the elbow bent, the point is just behind the end of the elbow crease).

b) Other patterns

Invasion of Cold

Unilateral, severe pain in the elbow that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by the application of heat.

Damp-Heat

Pain in the elbow with swelling, redness, and heat of the joint, a feeling of heaviness and numbness of the affected arm.

2. COLD HANDS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Empty

Heart-Yang deficiency

Cold hands, sweaty hands, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, a slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, feeling cold, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, L.I.-10 Shousanli, Du-14 Dazhui (with moxa).

Lung-Yang deficiency

Cold hands, sweaty hands, slight shortness of breath, slight cough with profuse, watery sputum, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, feeling cold, a feeling of cold of the upper back, absence of thirst, Pale and slightly wet tongue, Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, LU-9 Taiyuan, BL-13 Feishu, Du-12 Shenzhu (with moxa).

Heart-Blood deficiency

Cold hands, Palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Spleen-Yang deficiency

Cold hands and often cold feet, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude,

pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, oedema. Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

SP-3 Taibai, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu.

b) Other patterns

Liver-Qi stagnation

Cold hands, especially fingers, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Phlegm in the channels

Cold hands, numbness or tingling of the limbs, feeling of heaviness, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Cold hands are a reliable symptom indicative of Yang deficiency.

3. HOT HANDS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Heart-Fire

Hot hands, especially the dorsum, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Lung-Heat

Hot hands, especially the dorsum, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach-Heat

Hot hands, especially the dorsum, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger,

foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Hot palms, 5-palm heat, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, thirst with desire to sip fluids, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Hot palms, 5-palm heat; dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum, which could be blood tinged; dry mouth and throat at night, weak and/or hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, thin body or thin chest, insomnia, anxiety, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid tongue.

f) Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Hot palms, 5-palm heat, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, constipation (dry stools), dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, a feeling of hunger but no desire to eat, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

g) Stomach Damp-Heat

Hot hands (dorsum), swelling and redness of the joints, pain in the hands, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, a feeling of heaviness, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, a sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

h) Invasion of Wind

Dorsum of the hands hot to the touch, aversion to cold, chills, fever, stiff neck, occipital headache, Floating pulse.

Other symptoms and signs depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

4. PALE HANDS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Heart-Yang deficiency

Pale hands, cold hands, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, a slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, feeling cold, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Lung-Yang deficiency

Pale hands, cold hands, slight shortness of breath, slight cough with profuse, watery sputum, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, feeling cold, a feeling of cold of the upper back, absence of thirst, Pale and slightly wet tongue, Weak pulse.

c) Liver-Blood deficiency

Pale hands, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

d) Heart-Blood deficiency

Pale hands, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

5. RED DORSUM OF THE HANDS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Full Heat

Red dorsum of the hands, hot hands, feeling of heat, thirst, red face. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Heart, Lungs, or Stomach.

6. RED PALMS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Empty Heat

Red palms of the hands, hot hands, hands become hotter in the afternoon and evening, feeling of heat in the afternoon or evening, thirst with desire to drink in small sips. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Heart, Lungs, or Stomach.

7. SWEATY PALMS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Empty

Lung-Qi deficiency

Sweaty palms, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-13 Feishu.

Lung-Yang deficiency

Sweaty palms, pale hands, cold hands, slight shortness of breath, slight cough with profuse, watery sputum, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, feeling cold, a feeling of cold of the upper back, absence of thirst, Pale and slightly wet tongue, Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-13 Feishu (moxa).

Lung-Yin deficiency

Sweaty palms that are worse in the afternoon, hot palms, cough that is dry or with scanty-sticky sputum, weak and/or hoarse voice, dry mouth and throat, tickly throat, tiredness, dislike of speaking, thin body or thin chest, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating

(or with rootless coating) in the front part, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

Heart-Qi deficiency

Sweaty palms when nervous, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-6 Qihai.

Heart-Yang deficiency

Sweaty palms with cold sweat when nervous, cold hands, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, a slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, feeling cold, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-6 Qihai, Du-14 Dazhui (moxa).

Heart-Yin deficiency

Sweaty palms that are worse in the evening or when nervous, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

b) Other patterns

Lung-Heat

Sweaty palms, hot hands, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Fire

Sweaty palms and hot hands, especially when anxious, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed

sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

8. PAIN IN THE HANDS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Wind

Wandering pain in the hands, fingers, and other joints.

b) Cold

Pain in the hands that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by the application of heat; contraction of the fingers, feeling cold, cold hands.

c) Dampness

Ache and swelling of the hand and/or fingers, numbness of the hands.

d) Damp-Heat in the channels

Pain, swelling, and redness of the hands, numbness or tingling of the hands, feeling of heaviness of the arms, muscle ache.

e) Liver-Qi stagnation

Pain in the hands (often in the feet as well), hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

f) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Pain in the hands that is worse at night, rigidity of the fingers, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, abdominal pain, chest pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

g) Blood deficiency

Dull ache of the hands, cold hands, dizziness, blurred vision, scanty periods, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ affected, which may be the Heart, Liver, or Spleen. This pattern is more common in women.

h) Heart-Yang deficiency

Dull ache in the hands, cold hands, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, a slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, feeling cold, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

i) Lung-Yang deficiency

Dull ache in the hands, cold hands, slight shortness of breath, slight cough with profuse, watery sputum, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, feeling cold, a feeling of cold of the upper back, absence of thirst, Pale and slightly wet tongue, Weak pulse.

j) Stomach-Yang deficiency

Dull ache in the hands, cold hands (and often feet), discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium, better after eating and better with pressure or massage, no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods, vomiting of clear fluid, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

k) Heart-Yin deficiency

Dull ache in the hands that is worse in the evening, hot palms, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

l) Lung-Yin deficiency

Dull ache in the hands that is worse in the evening, hot palms, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with desire to sip water, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

9. ITCHY HANDS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Dampness

Itchy hands, swollen fingers with small white vesicles, fungal infections, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

b) Damp-Heat

Itchy hands, swollen and red fingers, small yellow vesicles, fungal infections, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Invasion of Wind

Itchy hands with acute onset, itching spreading up the arms and towards the face, red rash on hands.

d) Blood deficiency leading to Wind in the skin

Itchy hands, pale and cold hands, tingling of the hands, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

10. NUMBNESS/TINGLING OF THE HANDS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

Liver-Blood deficiency

Numbness/tingling of the hands and limbs, more tingling than numbness; dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

a) Phlegm

Numbness/tingling of the hands and limbs, more numbness than tingling; dizziness, feeling of heaviness of the body, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

b) Wind-Phlegm

Unilateral numbness of a hand, especially the first three fingers; severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

c) Liver-Wind

Unilateral numbness of a hand, especially the first three fingers; tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of the limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Dampness

Numbness or tingling of the hands, swelling of the fingers, muscle ache, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

e) Damp-Heat

Numbness or tingling of the hands, hot and swollen fingers, redness of the hands and fingers, ache in the wrist, muscle ache, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

f) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Numbness or tingling of the hands, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, abdominal pain, chest pain, painful periods, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

g) Invasion of external Wind

Numbness or tingling of the hands with acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, stiff neck, occipital headache, Floating pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether it is Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat.

11. TREMOR OF THE HANDS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Liver-Wind

Tremor of the hands, unilateral numbness or tingling of a hand, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, tics, Stiff, Deviated, or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Liver-Wind and Phlegm

Tremor of the hands, swollen hands, unilateral numbness or tingling of a hand, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippy pulse.

c) Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency leading to Wind

Mild tremor of the hands, numbness or tingling of the hands and limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, dry eyes, night-sweating, Pale or normal-coloured tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

d) Heat generating Wind

Tremor of the hands, convulsions, twitching of the limbs, high fever, fainting, rigidity of the neck, opisthotonos, macular rash, eyeballs turning up, clenching of the teeth, Dark-Red tongue without coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

12. OEDEMA OF THE HANDS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64 and 68](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#)

a) Lung-Yang deficiency

Oedema of the hands with slight pitting, cold hands, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, feeling of cold, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Spleen-Yang deficiency

Pitting oedema of the hands, cold limbs, weakness of the limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after

eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, feeling cold, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Liver-Qi stagnation

Non-pitting oedema of the hands, cold fingers and toes, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, premenstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

13. SWOLLEN FINGERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Cold-Dampness Painful Obstruction Syndrome

Swelling and pain of the fingers that is aggravated by exposure to cold and damp weather and alleviated by the application of heat or by exposure to dry weather; cold hands.

b) Damp-Heat Painful Obstruction Syndrome

Swelling, heat, and pain of the fingers that is aggravated by exposure to damp weather and alleviated in dry weather.

c) Wind-Dampness Painful Obstruction Syndrome

Swelling and pain of the fingers that is aggravated by damp weather, itching of the hands, vesicles on the skin of the hands.

d) Lung- and Spleen-Yang deficiency

Swelling of the fingers and hands, cold and pale hands, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, slight shortness of breath, slight cough with profuse, watery sputum, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, a feeling of cold of the upper back, absence of thirst, Pale and slightly wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

e) Qi stagnation

Swelling of the fingers before the period in women, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, premenstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

f) Blood stasis

Swelling and severe pain of the fingers, contraction of the fingers, dark complexion, purple nails, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which in this case may be the Liver or Heart.

g) Liver and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Blood Heat

Swollen, red, and hot fingers, conditions that are aggravated by exposure to heat; numbness or tingling of the limbs, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, malar flush, dry eyes, blurred vision, lower back ache, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

h) Wind-Water invading the Lungs

Sudden swelling of fingers and face gradually spreading to the whole body, bright-shiny complexion, scanty and pale urination, aversion to wind, fever, cough, slight breathlessness, sticky-white tongue coating, Floating-Slippery pulse.

14. DEFORMED KNUCKLES

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome with Phlegm

Deformed knuckles, pain in the fingers, numbness or tingling of the hands. If Phlegm is combined with Heat, the fingers will be red and hot to the touch.

b) Chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome with Phlegm and Blood stasis

Deformed knuckles, severe pain in the fingers, dark complexion, rigidity of the finger joints.

c) Chronic Painful Obstruction with Phlegm and Qi and/or Yin deficiency

Deformed knuckles, dull ache in the fingers, shiny skin, atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum of the hand, tiredness, loose stools, poor appetite, dry skin, night-sweating. The pulse and tongue depend on whether deficiency of Qi or Yin predominates.

15. CONTRACTION OF THE FINGERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Contraction of the fingers, cold hands, tingling of the limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Yin deficiency

Contraction of the fingers, thinning of muscles, hot palms, tingling of the limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters in the eyes, dry eyes, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but with red cheek-bones, withered and brittle nails, dry skin and hair, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Blood stasis

Contraction of the fingers, pain in the hands that is worse at night, rigidity of the limbs, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

d) Liver-Wind

Unilateral contraction of the fingers, unilateral numbness or tingling of a hand, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus,

headache, tics, Stiff, Deviated or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

e) Wind-Phlegm

Unilateral contraction of the fingers, unilateral numbness of a hand, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

f) Cold-Dampness

Contraction and swelling of the fingers, numbness, a feeling of heaviness, cold hands.

g) Liver-Qi stagnation

Contraction of the fingers that comes and goes according to emotional moods, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

h) Invasion of external Wind-Cold

Contraction of the fingers with acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, Floating pulse.

16. SPOON-SHAPED FINGERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs

Spoon-shaped fingers, cough with expectoration of white-watery sputum, feeling cold, cold hands and feet, nausea, vomiting, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, dull-white complexion, pale urine, Pale and Swollen tongue with wet-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

b) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Spoon-shaped fingers, hot fingers; barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum; shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, agitation, Red and

Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Lung and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Spoon-shaped fingers, dry cough that is worse in the evening, dry throat and mouth, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower back ache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

17. THIN, POINTED FINGERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Cold-Dampness in the Stomach

Thin, pointed fingers, pain and distension in the abdomen; abdomen feels cold, worse with ingestion of cold liquids; feeling of fullness and pain in the epigastrium, sticky taste, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Thin, pointed fingers, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, feeling of heaviness, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Thin, pointed fingers, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

18. CRACKED FINGERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Cracked fingers, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation,

dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Blood stasis

Cracked fingers, purplish hands, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

c) Yang deficiency with Empty-Cold

Cracked fingers, cold and pale hands, feeling cold, slight feeling of discomfort in the chest, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. Yang deficiency with Empty-Cold causing cracked fingers may be of the Heart or the Lungs.

19. TINEA (RINGWORM)

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) External invasion of Wind-Heat

Tinea of the hands, dry skin, itchy skin.

b) External invasion of Damp-Heat

Tinea of the hands, itchy skin, swollen hands, vesicles.

c) Toxic Heat in the skin

Tinea of the hands, intensely red rash with red papules that spreads quickly, unbearable itching, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

20. THICKENED FINGERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Thickened fingers, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling

of the limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

21. SHRIVELLED AND WRINKLED FINGERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Loss of fluids

Shrivalled and wrinkled fingers, dry skin, pale complexion, dry stools. This is a state of dryness that may occur after a prolonged spell of vomiting, sweating, or diarrhoea.

22. DRY, CRACKED, AND PEELING PALMS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Blood deficiency

Dry, cracked, and peeling palms; dry and brittle nails, dry skin, dizziness, tiredness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Liver-Blood or Heart-Blood deficiency.

b) Blood deficiency with Wind

Dry, cracked, and peeling palms; severe itching, dry and brittle nails, dry skin, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

23. VENULES ON THE THENAR EMINENCE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Cold in the Stomach

Bluish or bluish-purple venules on the thenar eminence, pain in the epigastrium, a feeling of cold, cold limbs,

preference for warmth, vomiting of clear fluids (which may alleviate the pain), nausea; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; preference for warm liquids, tongue with thick-white coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

b) Stomach Deficient and Cold

Short, bluish venules on the thenar eminence; discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium that is better after eating and better with pressure or massage; no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods, vomiting of clear fluid, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

c) Full Heat

Reddish venules on the thenar eminence, hot hands, red hands, thirst, feeling of heat, red face. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Stomach or Lungs.

d) Empty Heat

Reddish venules on the thenar eminence that are worse in the afternoon and evening, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Lungs or Stomach.

e) Blood stasis in the Stomach

Reddish-purple venules on the thenar eminence, severe, stabbing epigastric pain that may be worse at night, dislike of pressure, nausea; vomiting, possibly vomiting of blood; vomiting of food looking like coffee grounds, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

f) Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Yellowish-red venules on the thenar eminence, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, feeling of heaviness, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, a sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

24. ATROPHY OF THE THENAR EMINENCE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Atrophy of the thenar eminence, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Atrophy of the thenar eminence, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Atrophy of the thenar eminence, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

25. ATROPHY OF THE MUSCLES OF THE DORSUM OF THE HANDS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum of the hands, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum of the hand, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory,

night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Atrophy of the muscles of the dorsum of the hand, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

26. RIDGED NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Ridged nails, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Yin deficiency

Ridged, withered, and brittle nails, dry nails, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, blurred vision, floaters in the eyes, dry eyes, diminished night-vision, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion without lustre but with red cheek-bones, muscular weakness, cramps, very dry skin and hair, night-sweating, depression, a feeling of aimlessness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

27. THICKENING OF THE NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Liver-Fire

Thickening of the nails, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver-Blood stasis

Thickening of the nails, dark nails, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

c) Phlegm

Thickening of the nails, yellowish nails, swollen hands, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

28. COARSE AND THICK NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Qi and Blood deficiency with dryness of Blood generating Wind

Coarse and thick nails, ridged nails, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dull-pale complexion, dry skin, Pale and dry tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

29. CRACKED NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Qi and Blood deficiency with dryness of Blood

Cracked, coarse, and thick nails, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, dry skin, Pale and dry tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Yin deficiency

Cracked nails, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, dry throat in the evening, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Cracked and dark-purplish nails, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

30. NAILS FALLING OFF

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Toxic Heat in the Liver

Nails falling off, swollen, hot, and painful nails, pus in the nails, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, thirst, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

31. INDENTED NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficient and dry

Indented nails, brittle nails, withered nails, dry skin, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dull-pale complexion, scanty menstruation, Pale and dry tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. This is often seen in chronic skin diseases such as eczema and psoriasis.

b) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Indented nails, brittle nails, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

c) Heat injuring fluids

Indented nails, dry nails, feeling of heat, thirst, mental restlessness, dry skin, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

32. THIN AND BRITTLE NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Qi and Blood deficiency

Thin and brittle nails, dry nails, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Liver-Yin deficiency

Thin and brittle nails, dry nails, dry skin, dry eyes, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, blurred vision, floaters in eyes, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion without lustre but with red cheek-bones, cramps, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Thin and brittle nails, dark nails, thick nails, dry skin, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

d) Phlegm in the joints

Thin and brittle nails, dry nails, swollen and painful joints, joint deformities.

e) Kidney-Essence deficiency

Thin and brittle nails, poor bone development in children, softening of bones in adults, deafness, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower backache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

33. WITHERED AND BRITTLE NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Withered and brittle nails, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Yin deficiency

Withered and brittle nails, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, scanty menstruation, dry skin and hair, night-sweating, normal coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Withered and brittle nails, purple nails and lips, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse. Liver-Blood stasis may cause dryness and withered and brittle nails only in severe and advanced cases.

d) Liver-Fire

Withered and brittle nails, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

e) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Withered and brittle nails, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, ache in bones, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, lassitude, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Phlegm

Withered and brittle nails, thickened and yellow nails, numbness of the limbs, sputum in the throat, feeling

of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Blood Dryness and Empty Heat in acute febrile diseases

Withered and brittle nails with acute onset in the aftermath of an acute febrile disease, with high temperature reaching the Blood level; Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

34. WITHERED AND THICKENED NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Severe Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Withered and thickened nails, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Liver-Blood deficient and dry

Withered and thickened nails, brittle nails, dry skin, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale and dry tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Liver-Yin deficiency

Withered and thickened but brittle nails, dry nails, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, blurred vision, floaters in eyes, dry eyes, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion without lustre but with red cheek-bones, cramps, dry skin and hair, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat

Withered and thickened nails, nail infections, red nails, swollen junction of the nail and finger, swollen and painful fingers, feeling of heat, sticky taste, thirst,

mental restlessness, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

35. CURLING NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Qi and Blood deficiency with Blood stasis

Curling nails, purple nails, pain in the hands, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dark complexion, Pale or Purple tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

36. FLAKING NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Spleen and Kidney deficiency with Dampness

Flaking nails, lower backache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

37. TWISTED NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Twisted nails, ridged nails, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

38. NAILS WITH WHITE SPOTS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Qi deficiency

Nails with white spots, tiredness, loose stools, shortness of breath, weak voice, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This may be Qi deficiency of the Spleen, Heart, Lungs, Liver, or Kidneys.

39. PALE-WHITE NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Liver- and Spleen-Blood deficiency

Pale white nails, pale hands, cold hands, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, dull-pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, thin body, scanty periods or amenorrhoea, insomnia, dizziness, numbness of the limbs, blurred vision, floaters, diminished night-vision, pale lips, muscular weakness, cramps, withered and brittle nails, dry hair and skin, slight depression, a feeling of aimlessness, Pale tongue especially on the sides, Choppy or Fine pulse.

40. DULL-WHITE NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dull-white nails, pale hands, cold hands, lower back ache, cold knees, sensation of cold in the back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, weak knees, impotence, premature ejaculation, low sperm count, cold and thin sperm, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, apathy, oedema of the lower legs, infertility in women, loose stools, depression, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, chronic diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Loss of fluids

Dull-white, dry nails after profuse sweating, vomiting, or diarrhoea, dry skin.

41. RED NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Full Heat

Red nails, red dorsum of the hands, hot hands, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, thirst, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

42. YELLOW NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Yellow nails, swollen fingers, painful joints, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder

Yellow nails, swollen fingers, painful joints; fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or epigastrium; bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Phlegm

Yellowish and thick nails, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, swollen hands, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

43. BLUISH-GREENISH NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency with internal Cold

Bluish nails, dry nails, pale and cold hands, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, feeling cold, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse and Slow pulse.

b) Severe Spleen-Qi deficiency with internal Wind (children)

Greenish nails, thin fingers, poor appetite, thin body, child not developing well, flaccid muscles, fine tremor of limbs, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Dark, bluish-green nails, pain in the hands, rigidity of the fingers, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

44. DARK NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Kidney deficiency

Dark nails, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a deficiency of Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang.

b) Blood stasis

Dark nails, joint pain, dry nails, abdominal pain, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

45. PURPLE NAILS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Liver-Blood stasis

Purple nails, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses

in the abdomen, purple lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

b) Heat at the Blood Level

Purple nails, fever at night, macular rash, bleeding, mental confusion, Red tongue without coating, Fine and Rapid pulse.

46. SMALL OR ABSENT LUNULAE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Chronic Qi and Blood deficiency

Small or absent lunulae, ridged nails, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Yang Deficiency

Small or absent lunulae, feeling cold, cold limbs, loose stools, abundant-pale urination, tiredness, Pale and

wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ affected by Yang deficiency, which may be the Stomach, Spleen, Heart, Kidneys, or Lungs.

c) Internal Cold

Small or absent lunulae, feeling cold, cold limbs, abdominal pain that improves with the application of warmth, Pale tongue, Tight-Slow pulse.

47. LARGE LUNULAE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 15](#)

a) Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Large lunulae, brittle nails, dry throat at night, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, malar flush, insomnia, anxiety, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Liver, Lungs, Heart, Stomach, or Kidneys.

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Legs

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20. Tremor of the legs
21. Cramps in the calves
22. Pain in the groin
23. Lower leg ulcers
24. Toe ulcers
25. Pain in the soles
26. Burning sensation in the soles

1. OEDEMA OF THE FEET

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 64 and 68](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 18 and 19](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Empty

Spleen-Yang deficiency

Pitting oedema of the legs and abdomen, cold limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold. Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

SP-3 Taibai, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu (moxa).

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pitting oedema of the ankles and legs, weak knees, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-7 Fuliu, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu (moxa).

b) Other patterns

Damp-Heat

Swelling of the legs and ankles, ache, swelling, redness and heat of the joints, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the location of the Damp-Heat.

Qi Stagnation and stasis of Blood

Non-pitting oedema of the legs, feeling of distension of the legs, skin springs back on pressing the swollen area,

The following leg symptoms will be discussed:

1. Oedema of the feet
2. Atrophy of the legs
3. Paralysis of the legs
4. Festination
5. Unstable gait
6. Staggering gait
7. Stepping gait
8. Shuffling gait
9. Arched legs
10. Cold feet
11. Pain in the thigh
12. Pain in the hip
13. Pain in the knee
14. Pain in the foot
15. Weak knees
16. Stiff knees
17. Weakness of the legs
18. A feeling of heaviness of the legs
19. Restless legs

purplish colour of the legs, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

Cold-Dampness

Swelling of the legs and ankles, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, legs look puffy, ache in the joints, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Qi deficiency and Blood stasis

Oedema of the limbs, cold hands and feet, pain in the legs, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, slight shortness of breath, dark complexion, abdominal pain, Bluish-Purple tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: if it is not pitting (i.e. leaves a dent when pressed with the finger) it is not 'true' oedema.

2. ATROPHY OF THE LEGS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Atrophy or thinning of the muscles of the legs, weakness of the limbs, muscular weakness, gait like a duck, feet turning in or out, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. In children this corresponds to the sequelae stage of poliomyelitis.

b) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Atrophy or thinning of the leg muscles, weak knees, staggering gait, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache,

insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. This pattern is more common in the elderly.

c) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Atrophy or thinning of the leg muscles, cold and weak knees, oedema of the lower legs, muscular weakness, lower back ache, sensation of cold in the back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Atrophy or thinning of the leg muscles, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

E) Kidney-essence deficiency

Atrophy or thinning of the leg muscles, late development in children, hands cannot grasp, cannot put feet down, slow mental development. This pattern occurs only in children or babies and is often associated with the Five Retardations (slow development in children involving standing, walking, teeth development, hair development and speech) and the Five Flaccidities (late closure of the fontanellae, flaccidity of mouth, hands, feet, and muscles).

3. PARALYSIS OF THE LEGS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Paralysis of the legs, weak and cold limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, uncomfortable

feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Paralysis of the legs, weak limbs, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

c) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Paralysis of the legs, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Retention of Dampness in the muscles

Paralysis of the legs, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, swelling of the limbs, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the body, sticky taste, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

e) Liver-Blood stasis

Paralysis of the legs, pain in the limbs that may be worse at night, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

f) Wind and Phlegm in the channels

Paralysis of the leg on one side, numbness of the limbs, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, numbness or tingling of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse. This corresponds to the sequelae stage of Wind-Stroke.

4. FESTINATION

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

'Festination' refers to a particular gait in which the patient lifts the feet up higher than necessary and then steps forward in haste, as if trying to prevent falling forwards.

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with internal Wind

Festination, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, tremors, tic; normal-coloured, Deviated, or Moving tongue without coating; Floating-Empty and slightly Wiry pulse.

b) Qi and Blood deficiency with internal Wind

Festination, weak limbs, slight tremor of the limbs, tic, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale and Deviated or Moving tongue, Weak or Choppy and slightly Wiry pulse.

5. UNSTABLE GAIT

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with internal Wind

Unstable gait, severe dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, tremors, tic; normal-coloured, Deviated, or Moving tongue without coating; Floating-Empty and slightly Wiry pulse.

b) Qi and Blood deficiency with internal Wind

Unstable gait, weak limbs, slight tremor of the limbs, tic, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness,

blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale and Deviated or Moving tongue, Weak or Choppy and slightly Wiry pulse.

6. STAGGERING GAIT

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Staggering gait, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Phlegm and Blood stasis

Staggering gait, pain in the legs that is worse at night, swollen legs, heaviness of the legs, Purple and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

7. STEPPING GAIT

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with internal Wind

Stepping gait, severe dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, tremors, tic; normal-coloured, Deviated, or Moving tongue without coating; Floating-Empty and slightly Wiry pulse.

b) Qi and Blood deficiency with internal Wind

Stepping gait, weak limbs, slight tremor of the limbs, tic, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs,

palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale and Deviated or Moving tongue, Weak or Choppy and slightly Wiry pulse.

8. SHUFFLING GAIT

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Wind-Phlegm in the channels

Shuffling gait, numbness of the legs, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, tremors, tic; normal-coloured, Deviated, or Moving and Swollen tongue without coating; Floating-Empty and slightly Wiry-Slippery pulse.

9. ARCHED LEGS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 19](#)

a) Congenital deficiency of Stomach and Spleen

Arched legs in children, thin and weak child, poor digestion, weakness of the legs, abdominal distension, poor appetite, loose stools, tiredness.

b) Congenital deficiency of Liver and Kidneys

Arched legs in children, thin and weak child, weakness of the legs and knees, nocturnal enuresis, weak back.

10. COLD FEET

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Empty Kidney-Yang deficiency

Cold feet, oedema of the feet, cold knees, lower back ache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees,

tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Cold feet, numbness of the feet, dry feet, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Cold feet, oedema of the feet, cold and weak legs, cold and weak knees, lower back ache, sensation of cold in the back, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Du-4 Mingmen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, ST-36 Zusanli. Moxa.

b) Other patterns

Phlegm in the Lower Burner

Cold feet, feeling of heaviness of the legs, numbness of the legs, abdominal pain, excessive vaginal discharge, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Cold feet are often a reliable symptom of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

11. PAIN IN THE THIGH

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Damp-Heat

Burning pain in the inner thigh that may extend to the external genitalia, feeling of heaviness of the legs, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, excessive vaginal discharge, vaginal redness or soreness and itching, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Cold-Dampness

Ache in the inner thigh that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by application of heat, feeling of heaviness of the legs, dull-pale complexion, cold limbs, excessive white vaginal discharge, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

c) Qi deficiency and Blood stasis

Ache in the thigh that is worse at night, muscular weakness, weak limbs, tiredness, dark complexion, rigidity of the knees, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Chronic dull ache in the thigh, cold and weak knees, lower back ache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

e) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood in the descending branch of the Penetrating Vessel

Ache in the inner thigh, often in conjunction with the period in women; cold feet, feeling of heat in the face, abdominal fullness and pain, irregular periods, visible venules on the inside of the legs, Firm pulse.

12. PAIN IN THE HIP

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Stabbing hip pain that is worse at night, marked rigidity of the joint, feeling of distension of the legs, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Invasion of Cold and Dampness

Unilateral, severe hip pain that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by application of heat, feeling of heaviness of the legs, cold legs, rigidity.

13. PAIN IN THE KNEE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Invasion of Cold and Dampness

Unilateral severe pain in the knee that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by the application of heat, rigidity of the joint, swelling of the knee, feeling of heaviness of the legs.

b) Invasion of Cold

Unilateral severe pain in the knee that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by the application of heat, better with exercise and worse with rest; rigidity of the joint.

c) Damp-Heat

Severe pain in the knee, with redness, swelling, and heat.

d) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Pain in the knee that does not react to weather conditions, pain aggravated by movement and ameliorated by rest, no swelling. This is usually caused by repetitive strain injury or sprain.

e) Kidney deficiency

Chronic dull ache and weakness in both knees, gradual onset, better with rest, worse with exercise; lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

14. PAIN IN THE FOOT

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Dampness

Ache and swelling of the feet, cold feet, feeling of heaviness of the legs.

b) Damp-Heat

Ache and swelling of the feet; hot, red, and smelly feet; feeling of heaviness of the legs.

c) Kidney deficiency

Dull ache in the feet, weak knees, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus. Other manifestations depend on whether there is Yin or Yang deficiency.

d) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Dull ache in the feet, numbness of the feet, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

e) Damp-Phlegm

Ache in the dorsum or ball of the foot, tingling of the feet, feeling of heaviness of the legs,

15. WEAK KNEES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Weak and cold knees, lower back ache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency

Weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea,

normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Weak knees, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

16. STIFF KNEES

a) Cold-Dampness in the channels

Stiff and swollen knees, cold feeling of the knees, knee ache that is aggravated by exposure to cold and dampness and alleviated by the application of heat, feeling of heaviness of the legs, cold legs.

b) Cold in the channels

Stiff and painful knees, pain that is aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by the application of heat.

c) Dampness

Stiff knees, swollen knees, numbness of the legs, feeling of heaviness of the legs, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Damp-Heat

Stiff knees, swollen, red, painful and hot knees, numbness of the legs, feeling of heaviness of the legs, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

e) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Stiff knees, painful knees, ameliorated by mild exercise; stiff tendons, may be worse at night; Wiry pulse.

f) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Slight stiffness of the knees, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination

at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

17. WEAKNESS OF THE LEGS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Weakness of the legs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Weakness of the legs, cold feet and legs, oedema of the ankles, weak and cold knees, lower back ache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Weakness of the legs, thin legs, unsteady walking, hot soles at night, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Weakness of the legs, thin legs, unsteady walking, hot soles at night, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

18. FEELING OF HEAVINESS OF THE LEGS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Full**Dampness**

Feeling of heaviness of the legs, numbness, swelling of the legs, feeling of heaviness in general, epigastric fullness, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Damp-Heat

Feeling of heaviness of the legs, swelling of the legs, hot feet, muscle ache, numbness, epigastric fullness, sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Full/Empty**Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness**

Slight feeling of heaviness of the legs, weakness of the limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, abdominal fullness, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, BL-20 Pishu, ST-36 Zusanli.

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Dampness

Slight feeling of heaviness of the legs, weak and cold knees, weak knees, lower back ache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale and wet tongue with a sticky coating, Deep-Weak and slightly Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

A feeling of heaviness of the legs is a certain symptom of Dampness in the Lower Burner.

19. RESTLESS LEGS**a) Empty****Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency**

Restless legs in the evening, hot feet in bed at night with desire to stick them out of the bed, weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Restless legs, weak legs, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-39 Xiajuxu.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Restless legs, numbness or tingling of the legs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

b) Other patterns

Deficiency of Blood in the Penetrating Vessel

Restless legs, anxiety, dizziness, scanty periods, irregular periods, abdominal and umbilical fullness, numbness or tingling of the legs and big toes, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

I find ST-36 Zusanli, ST-37 Shangjuxu, and ST-39 Xiajuxu in combination an effective treatment for restless legs.

20. TREMOR OF THE LEGS

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 64](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 4 and 18](#)

a) Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency leading to Wind

Mild tremor of the legs, numbness and tingling of the limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, scanty menstruation, dry eyes, fine tremor of legs, tic, vertigo, tongue that is Pale with coating or normal-coloured without coating, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency with internal Wind

Mild tremor of the legs, vertigo, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, vertigo, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, lassitude, depression, slight anxiety, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

21. CRAMPS IN THE CALVES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Cramps in the calves at night or during moderate exercise, numbness or tingling of legs, dizziness, blurred

vision, floaters, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Blood deficiency with Empty-Wind

Severe cramps in the calves at night, numbness or tingling of the legs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, vertigo, tremors, Pale tongue, Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

c) Wind-Phlegm

Severe cramps in the calves, numbness or tingling of the legs, feeling of heaviness of the legs, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippy pulse.

d) Liver-Blood stasis

Severe cramps in the calves that are often worse at night, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

I find BL-57 Chengshan an effective point for cramps in the calves.

22. PAIN IN THE GROIN

a) Dampness

Pain in the groin, feeling of heaviness of the legs, swelling, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

b) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood in the Liver channel

Severe pain in the groin that is alleviated by mild exercise, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

c) Girdle Vessel pathology (Damp-Heat)

Pain in the groin that radiates from the lower abdomen, feeling of heaviness, abdominal fullness, excessive vaginal discharge, unilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry pulse on both Middle positions.

23. LOWER LEG ULCERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Damp-Heat

Ulcers on the lower legs, red, painful, swollen, oozing a sticky-yellow fluid; itchy, hardness of the edges of the ulcer after oozing fluid, feeling of heaviness, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Ulcers on the lower leg, swollen, not painful, pale red, oozing a thin fluid; poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, abdominal fullness, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

c) Qi stagnation and Blood stasis

Ulcers on the lower legs, dark in colour, painful, hard, oozing a turbid fluid; pain in the legs, feeling of distension of the legs, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Ulcers on the lower legs, not painful, pale red; dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

24. TOE ULCERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Toxic Heat

Dark ulcers on the toes, oozing a dark fluid or blood; festering, burning pain that is worse at night, insomnia, mental restlessness, thirst, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) External Toxic Heat

Ulcers on the toes, especially the inner aspect of the big toe, dark nails, swelling to the side of the nail, pain, Floating pulse.

25. PAIN IN THE SOLES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#)

a) Stomach-Qi deficiency

Dull ache in the soles (ball of the foot) with slow onset, weak legs, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness especially in the morning, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Stomach-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Dull ache in the soles (ball of the foot) with acute onset, swelling of the ball of the foot, feeling of heaviness of the legs, weak legs, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness especially in the morning, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

c) Stomach-Heat

Burning pain in the ball of the foot, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Liver-Fire

Burning pain under the big toe, hot feet, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark

urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

e) Dampness in the Spleen

Dull ache under the big toe, swelling of the foot, feeling of heaviness of the legs, sweaty feet, feeling of fullness in the epigastrium and abdomen, sticky taste, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

f) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dull ache in the soles, cold feet, cold and weak knees, lower back ache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

g) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dull ache in the soles in the evening or at night, burning sensation in the soles, weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

h) Kidney deficiency with Dampness

Dull ache in the soles with a slight puffiness, feeling of heaviness and weakness of the legs, weak knees, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

26. BURNING SENSATION IN THE SOLES

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 39

a) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Burning sensation in the soles that is worse in the evening or at night, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower back ache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

b) Stomach Heat

Burning sensation in the ball of the foot, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Liver-Fire

Burning sensation under the big toe, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

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Lower Back

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Lower backache*Empty**Full**Other patterns***Sciatica***Full**Empty/Full***Feeling of cold and heaviness of the lower back***Kidney-Yang deficiency**Cold-Dampness in the back**Invasion of Wind-Water***Weakness of the lower back and knees***Empty**Other patterns***Stiffness of the lower back***Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood**Cold-Dampness in the lower back**Kidney-Yang deficiency***Coccyx pain***Traumatic injury**Kidney deficiency**Cold-Dampness in the Bladder channel**Damp-Heat in the Bladder channel***Ulcers on the buttocks***Toxic Heat**External Toxic Heat***Papules or pustules on buttocks***Damp-Heat in the Bladder***Scoliosis***Empty**Other patterns***Lordosis***Kidney-Essence deficiency**Deficiency of Liver- and Kidney-Yin**Retention of Wind-Dampness in the channels of the back**Deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen***Spine bent forward***Kidney-Essence deficiency with weakness of the Governing Vessel***Atrophy of the muscles along the spine***Spleen-Qi deficiency***Spots on the back***Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat**Damp-Heat**Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat***Rigidity of the lower back***Retention of Damp-Cold**Blood stasis***Vesicles on the lower back***Retention of Damp-Heat***Dryness and redness of the skin of the lower back***Liver-Fire**Heart-Fire***Yellow colour of the lower back***Damp-Heat in the Spleen and Kidneys***Skin marks on the lower back***Girdle Vessel pathology with Kidney deficiency***Boils on BL-23 Shenshu***Phlegm with Kidney deficiency***Kyphosis***Kidney-Essence deficiency in the elderly**Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency**Deficiency of the Governing Vessel**Kidney-Essence deficiency in children***Flattening of lumbar spine***Qi stagnation**Blood stasis**Cold***List of spine***Qi stagnation**Blood stasis**Cold*

The following lower back symptoms will be discussed:

1. Lower backache
2. Sciatica
3. Feeling of cold and heaviness of the lower back
4. Weakness of the lower back and knees
5. Stiffness of the lower back
6. Coccyx pain
7. Ulcers on the buttocks

8. Papules or pustules on buttocks
9. Scoliosis
10. Lordosis
11. Spine bent forward
12. Atrophy of the muscles along the spine
13. Spots on the back
14. Rigidity of the lower back
15. Vesicles on the lower back
16. Dryness and redness of the skin of the lower back
17. Yellow colour of the lower back
18. Skin marks on the lower back
19. Boils on BL-23 Shenshu
20. Kyphosis
21. Flattening of lumbar spine
22. List of spine

1. LOWER BACKACHE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

a) Empty

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Chronic lower back ache that may be unilateral, bilateral, or on the midline and that may recur in bouts; feeling of weakness and cold of the lower back, better with rest and worse with exercise; weak and cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Chronic lower back ache that may be unilateral, bilateral, or on the midline and that may recur in bouts, feeling of weakness of the lower back; contraction of the muscles of the lower back, better with rest and worse with exercise; thin body, weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, slight anxiety, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

b) Full

Sprain of the back

Acute, severe back ache that may be unilateral or on the midline, rigidity of the back with inability to bend forward, pain in the leg.

Acupuncture

S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai (Governing Vessel), Shiqizhuixia extra point (on Du channel, below L-5), BL-23 Shenshu, BL-26 Guanyuanshu. Cupping.

Cold-Dampness in the lower back

Acute or chronic back ache that is worse in the morning and better as the day progresses, better with light exercise and worse with rest; feeling of heaviness, feeling of cold.

Acupuncture

Shiqizhuixia extra point (on Du channel, below L-5), BL-23 Shenshu, BL-26 Guanyuanshu. Cupping.

Blood stasis in the back

Chronic, severe unilateral lower back ache that improves with light exercise and worsens with rest, worse in the morning but also at night; rigidity of the back, pain centred in a small area, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

Shiqizhuixia extra point (on Du channel, below L-5), BL-23 Shenshu, BL-26 Guanyuanshu, SP-10 Xuehai, BL-17 Geshu. Cupping.

c) Other patterns

Invasion of Wind-Cold

Sudden backache on the midline extending from the occiput to the lower back, aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

In chronic lower backache there is always a Kidney deficiency, and I use always BL-23 Shenshu.

2. SCIATICA

Apart from identifying the pattern, the affected channel must be identified. The channels affected are the Bladder, Gall-Bladder, or Stomach, with often more than one channel involved.

a) Full

Cold-Dampness in the lower back and legs

Dull pain in the leg that is worse in the morning, numbness or tingling of the leg, feeling of heaviness of the leg, pain aggravated by exposure to cold and dampness and ameliorated by the application of heat.

Acupuncture

BL-60 Kunlun, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-54 Zhibian, BL-40 Weizhong. Moxa.

Damp-Heat in the lower back and legs

Severe pain in the leg that is worse in the afternoon or evening, numbness or tingling of the leg, feeling of heaviness and heat of the leg.

Acupuncture

BL-60 Kunlun, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-54 Zhibian, BL-40 Weizhong.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Severe stabbing pain in the leg that is slightly better with movement and worse with rest or sitting and during the night, pain slightly ameliorated by the application of heat.

Acupuncture

BL-60 Kunlun, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-54 Zhibian, BL-40 Weizhong, LIV-3 Taichong, SP-10 Xuehai.

b) Empty/Full

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Dampness

Dull ache in the leg that is better with rest and worse with over-exertion, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling of heaviness of the legs, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Weak and slightly Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-60 Kunlun, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-54 Zhibian, BL-40 Weizhong, Du-4 Mingmen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-9 Shuifen. Moxa.



CLINICAL NOTE

In my experience, if the pulse is Rapid and Slippery and the tongue is Red with a sticky-yellow coating in sciatica, it is more difficult to treat.

3. FEELING OF COLD AND HEAVINESS OF THE LOWER BACK

a) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Chronic feeling of cold and heaviness of the lower back, desire to apply warmth to the lower back, worse for exposure to cold and dampness, weak and cold knees, feeling as if sitting in cold water, cold feet, lower back ache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Cold-Dampness in the back

Feeling of cold and heaviness of the lower back, feeling of heaviness in general, chronic back ache, cold legs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

c) Invasion of Wind-Water

Sudden feeling of cold and heaviness of the lower back, oedema of the ankles, aversion to cold, Floating pulse.

4. WEAKNESS OF THE LOWER BACK AND KNEES

a) Empty

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Weak back and knees, lower back ache, cold knees, better with rest and worse with exercise, feeling cold, cold feet, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Du-4 Mingmen, KI-10 Yingu. Moxa.

b) Other patterns

Kidney-Yin deficiency



Weak back and knees, lower back ache, feeling of heat, hot feet in bed at night, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Cold-Dampness in the lower back

Weak back and knees, feeling of heaviness and cold of the lower back, lower back ache, swollen feet, worse with exposure to damp and cold, better with application of warmth.

Damp-Heat in the lower back

Weak back and knees, feeling of heaviness and burning of the lower back, lower back ache, swollen and hot feet, worse with exposure to damp and heat, better in dry weather.

5. STIFFNESS OF THE LOWER BACK

a) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Severe stiffness of the lower back, inability or difficulty in bending forward or turning the waist, back ache, stiffness alleviated by moderate exercise and aggravated by inactivity, Wiry pulse.

b) Cold-Dampness in the lower back

Stiffness of the lower back, feeling of heaviness of the back, numbness or tingling of the legs, stiffness worse in the morning and better as the day progresses.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Slight stiffness of the lower back, dull back ache, weak and cold knees, lower back ache, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

6. COCCYX PAIN

a) Traumatic injury

Coccyx pain with history of traumatic injury, difficulty in walking, lying down, turning, pain aggravated by coughing and sneezing.

b) Kidney deficiency

Dull ache in the coccyx not related to movement, numbness, no history of traumatic injury, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, Weak pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

c) Cold-Dampness in the Bladder channel

Coccyx pain, feeling of heaviness of the legs, numbness or tingling of the legs, pain aggravated by exposure to cold or dampness and ameliorated by the application of heat.

d) Damp-Heat in the Bladder channel

Severe coccyx pain, feeling of heaviness of the legs, numbness or tingling of the legs, feeling of heat in the lower back.

7. ULCERS ON THE BUTTOCKS

a) Toxic Heat

Unilateral ulcers on the buttock, red, swollen, and painful in the centre with a red edge around, indistinct margins, oozing a sticky-yellow fluid; festering, thirst, feeling of heat, Red tongue with red points and a thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) External Toxic Heat

Ulcers on the buttocks, red, swollen, and painful with sudden onset, Floating-Rapid pulse.

8. PAPULES OR PUSTULES ON BUTTOCKS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Papules or pustules on buttocks, frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, difficult urination, dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

9. SCOLIOSIS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Empty

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Congenital scoliosis, lower back ache, weakness of knees and legs, poor bone development in children, softening of bones in adults, deafness, poor memory, loose teeth, falling hair or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue, and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai (Governing Vessel), KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-52 Zhishi, KI-13 Qixue.

b) Other patterns

Kidney deficiency with Blood stasis

Scoliosis, severe lower back ache, stiff back, dizziness, tinnitus. Other symptoms and signs, including tongue and pulse, depend on whether there is Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Retention of Wind-Dampness in the channels of the back

Scoliosis, back ache that is aggravated by damp and cold weather, feeling of heaviness in the back.

10. LORDOSIS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Kidney-Essence deficiency

Congenital lordosis, lower back ache, weak knees, poor bone development in children, softening of bones in adults, deafness, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue, and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

b) Deficiency of Liver- and Kidney-Yin

Lordosis, lower back ache, weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Retention of Wind-Dampness in the channels of the back

Lordosis, back ache that is aggravated by damp and cold weather, feeling of heaviness in the back.

d) Deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen

Lordosis, weak limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

11. SPINE BENT FORWARD

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Kidney-Essence deficiency with weakness of the Governing Vessel

Spine bent forward, lower backache, weakness of knees and legs, poor bone development in children, softening

of bones in adults, deafness, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue, and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency. If a person is born with such deformity of the spine, the condition is constitutional and there may not be any other symptoms.

12. ATROPHY OF THE MUSCLES ALONG THE SPINE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Atrophy of the muscles along the spine, weak muscles, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

13. SPOTS ON THE BACK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Wind-Heat with Toxic Heat

Red papules on the upper back with acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Floating-Overflowing-Rapid.

b) Damp-Heat

Red papules or pustules on the back, lower back ache, feeling of heaviness of the back, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Stomach, Spleen, or Liver.

c) Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat

Red papules on the back that may be itchy and painful, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, slight feeling of oppression of the chest, irritability, pre-menstrual tension,

irregular periods, pre-menstrual breast distension, feeling of a lump in the throat, feeling of heat, red face, thirst, propensity to outbursts of anger, heavy periods, tongue Red on the sides, Wiry and slightly Rapid pulse.

14. RIGIDITY OF THE LOWER BACK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Retention of Damp-Cold

Rigidity of the lower back, swelling of the muscles of the lower back, back ache that is worse with rest and better with moderate activity, feeling of cold of the back, feeling of heaviness of the back.

b) Blood stasis

Rigidity of the lower back, back ache that may be worse at night; stabbing pain of the lower back that is worse with rest and better with movement; Wiry pulse.

15. VESICLES ON THE LOWER BACK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Retention of Damp-Heat

Vesicles filled with clear fluid on the lower back that look like a string of pearls, back ache, feeling of heaviness of the back, sticky yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

16. DRYNESS AND REDNESS OF THE SKIN OF THE LOWER BACK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Liver-Fire

Red and dry macular rash on the skin of the lower back that is itchy and hot, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Heart-Fire

Red and dry macular rash on the skin of the lower and upper back that is itchy and hot, dark urine, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

17. YELLOW COLOUR OF THE LOWER BACK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Spleen and Kidneys

Yellow colour of the lower back, small vesicles on the lower back, back ache, feeling of heaviness of the back, turbid urine, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

18. SKIN MARKS ON THE LOWER BACK

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Girdle Vessel pathology with Kidney deficiency

Discolouration of the skin of the lower back (e.g. long skin marks often distributed like a belt), not itchy, not painful; lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling of heaviness of the lower abdomen and back, urinary discomfort, excessive vaginal discomfort, feeling of bearing down.

19. BOILS ON BL-23 SHENSHU

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Phlegm with Kidney deficiency

Boils on BL-23 Shenshu, feeling of heaviness of the back, swelling of the muscles of the back, lower back ache that is alleviated by rest, weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus,

feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue, Weak pulse.

20. KYPHOSIS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Kidney-Essence deficiency in the elderly

Kyphosis, softening of the bones, deafness, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower back ache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue, and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

b) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Kyphosis, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Deficiency of the Governing Vessel

Kyphosis, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, poor memory, weak sexual function. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

d) Kidney-Essence deficiency in children

Congenital kyphosis, poor bone development, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue, and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

21. FLATTENING OF LUMBAR SPINE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Qi stagnation

Flattening of lumbar spine, stiffness of the spinal muscles, back ache that improves with gentle exercise, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

b) Blood stasis

Flattening of lumbar spine, stiffness of the spinal muscles, rigidity of the back, back ache that improves with gentle exercise and is worse at night, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Cold

Flattening of lumbar spine; back ache that improves with the application of heat and is aggravated by exposure to cold and dampness; feeling of cold, cold back and knees, Pale tongue, Tight-Slow pulse.

22. LIST OF SPINE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 11](#)

a) Qi stagnation

List of spine, stiffness of the spinal muscles, back ache that improves with gentle exercise, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

b) Blood stasis

List of spine, stiffness of the spinal muscles, rigidity of the back, back ache that improves with gentle exercise and is worse at night, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Cold

List of spine, back ache that improves with the application of heat and is aggravated by exposure to cold and dampness, feeling of cold, cold back and knees, Pale tongue, Tight-Slow pulse.

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Body

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Body aches*Wind**Dampness**Qi stagnation**Blood stasis**Blood deficiency**Stomach-Heat***Pain in the joints***Invasion of Wind in the joints**Invasion of Dampness in the joints**Invasion of Cold in the joints**Damp-Heat in the joints**Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood**Liver-Blood deficiency**Kidney deficiency***Paralysis***Empty**Empty/Full**Other patterns***Hemiplegia***Wind in the channels**Liver-Wind**Wind-Phlegm**Phlegm-Fire**Damp-Phlegm**Qi deficiency and Blood stasis**Liver and Kidney deficiency**Collapse of Yang**Collapse of Yin***Numbness/tingling***Empty**Full**Other patterns***Numbness of half the body***Liver-Blood deficiency**Damp-Phlegm**Liver-Wind**Deficiency of Central Qi**Dampness***Itching***Full**Empty**Other patterns***Oedema***Empty**Full**Other patterns***Obesity***Damp-Phlegm with Qi deficiency***Loss of weight***Yin deficiency**Liver-Blood deficiency**Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency**Liver-Fire**Stomach-Heat***Jaundice***Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder**Cold-Dampness in the Gall-Bladder**Blood stasis**Spleen-Qi deficiency and Blood deficiency***Twitching of muscles***Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency**Heart- or Lung-Yang deficiency with Water Overflowing**Deficiency of Qi and Blood***Opisthotonos***Liver-Wind*

The following body symptoms will be discussed:

1. Body aches
2. Pain in the joints
3. Paralysis
4. Hemiplegia
5. Numbness/tingling
6. Numbness of half the body
7. Itching
8. Oedema
9. Obesity
10. Loss of weight
11. Jaundice
12. Twitching of muscles
13. Opisthotonos

1. BODY ACHES

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

Body aches include aches in the muscles and/or joints.

a) Wind

Ache in the joints, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, Floating pulse. This is a pain that occurs in acute invasions of Wind.

b) Dampness

Ache in the muscles and joints, feeling of heaviness, headache with a feeling as if the head were wrapped in cotton wool, sticky tongue coating, Soggy or Slippery pulse. This is probably the most common type of joint and muscle ache, and it can be either acute or chronic. It is seen in Fixed Painful Obstruction Syndrome and in Post-viral Fatigue Syndrome.

c) Qi Stagnation

Ache in the joints (especially of the upper part of the body) that is better with exercise, feeling of distension of the limbs, Wiry pulse.

d) Blood stasis

Severe stabbing pain in the joints that is better with exercise, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse. This pattern is more likely to occur in the elderly, but it is also relatively frequent in women suffering from Blood stasis. For example, it may occur after childbirth if there is stasis of Blood.

e) Blood deficiency

Dull ache in all the muscles that is worse after exercise, frequently after childbirth, tingling of the limbs, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

f) Stomach-Heat

Pain in all the muscles, skin hot to the touch, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

2. PAIN IN THE JOINTS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

a) Invasion of Wind in the joints

Pain moving from joint to joint, in acute cases Floating pulse.

b) Invasion of Dampness in the joints

Fixed pain, swelling of the joints, feeling of heaviness and tingling of the joints.

c) Invasion of Cold in the joints

Fixed, severe pain, usually in one joint, aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by application of heat.

d) Damp-Heat in the joints

Fixed pain, swollen, hot and red joints.

e) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Pain and rigidity of the joints, stiff limbs, pain ameliorated by moderate exercise and aggravated by inactivity, Wiry pulse.

f) Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull joint ache, worse with exercise or after the period, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

g) Kidney deficiency

Dull joint ache, especially of the lower limbs, that is worse with exercise; lower back ache, weak knees, weak legs.

3. PARALYSIS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#)

This refers to bilateral paralysis of the arms and/or legs and of the body itself.

a) Empty

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Paralysis, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. In neurological problems, such as multiple sclerosis, this pattern corresponds to the condition's middle stage.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-31 Biguan, L.I.-10 Shousanli.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Long-term paralysis, slow onset, weak limbs, weak knees, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. In neurological problems, such as multiple sclerosis, this pattern corresponds to the condition's late stage.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, KI-10 Yingu, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, ST-31 Biguan, L.I.-10 Shousanli.

b) Empty/Full

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Internal Wind

Long-term paralysis, slow onset, tremor or spasms of the limbs, weak limbs, weak knees, numbness or tingling of the limbs, lower back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured Deviated or Moving tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and slightly Wiry pulse. In neurological problems, such as multiple sclerosis, this pattern corresponds to the condition's final stage.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, KI-10 Yingu, KI-3 Taixi, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, ST-31 Biguan, L.I.-10 Shousanli, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai (Governing Vessel).

c) Other patterns

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Paralysis, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Qi and Blood deficiency

Paralysis of the four limbs and body, weak limbs, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Liver-Blood stasis

Paralysis, stabbing pain in the joints, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

Cold-Dampness

Paralysis, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, numbness, oedema of the limbs, epigastric fullness, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse. In neurological problems, such as multiple sclerosis, this corresponds to the condition's initial stage.

Damp-Heat

Paralysis of the lower limbs, hot limbs, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, numbness of the limbs, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling of heat, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Blood deficiency

Paralysis, numbness or tingling of limbs, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, dizziness,

blurred vision, floaters, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

Stomach and Spleen Fluids injured

Paralysis with sudden onset after a febrile disease, weak limbs, hands cannot grasp, dry skin and mouth. This pattern corresponds to the aftermath of a febrile disease, such as polio.

4. HEMIPLEGIA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#)

This refers to unilateral paralysis of the arm and/or leg. The first six patterns correspond to different types of Wind-stroke.

a) Wind in the channels

Hemiplegia, deviation of eye and mouth, aphasia.

b) Liver-Wind

Hemiplegia, tremors, numbness of the limbs, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, Stiff, Deviated, or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Wind-Phlegm

Hemiplegia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

d) Phlegm-Fire

Hemiplegia, numbness of the limbs, sudden unconsciousness, mental confusion, deviation of eye and mouth, contraction of hands, clenched teeth, red eyes and face, rattling sound in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of sticky-yellow sputum, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

e) Damp-Phlegm

Hemiplegia, numbness of the limbs, sudden unconsciousness, mental confusion, phlegm in the throat, clenched

teeth, feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of profuse, sticky sputum, pasty-white complexion, cold limbs, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

f) Qi deficiency and Blood stasis

Hemiplegia, dull skin colour, oedema, rigidity of tendons, contraction of upper limbs, lower limbs relaxed and stretched; stretching of upper limbs or bending of lower limbs causes pain; tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, slight shortness of breath, pale complexion, Bluish-Purple tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse. This corresponds to the sequelae stage of Wind-stroke.

g) Liver and Kidney deficiency

Hemiplegia, lower back ache, soft limbs, dizziness, tinnitus, poor memory, blurred vision, mental confusion. This pattern may be associated with a Yin and or Yang deficiency, and the tongue may be Red or Pale, respectively. This pattern also corresponds to the sequelae stage of Wind-stroke.

h) Collapse of Yang

Hemiplegia, sudden unconsciousness, mental confusion, eyes shut, mouth and hands open, urinary incontinence, weak breathing, cold limbs, bright-white complexion, sweating on the forehead, Pale and Short tongue, Hidden or Scattered pulse. This corresponds to an acute stage of Wind-stroke.

i) Collapse of Yin

Hemiplegia, sudden unconsciousness, deviation of eye and mouth, eyes shut, mouth and hands open, cold limbs but red face, weak breathing, Red tongue without coating, Minute pulse. This corresponds to an acute stage of Wind-stroke.

5. NUMBNESS/TINGLING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

“Numbness” includes numbness itself and/or a tingling sensation. Numbness is more common in Phlegm and Wind, whereas tingling is more common in deficiency

patterns such as Liver-Blood deficiency. However, this is only a broad rule.

a) Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency

Tingling of limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. This is a very common cause of numbness/tingling and it occurs more frequently in women.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-32 Futu.

b) Full

Phlegm in the channels

Numbness, feeling of heaviness, feeling of oppression of the chest, phlegm in the throat, Swollen tongue with a sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-9 Yinlingquan, ST-32 Futu, ST-36 Zusanli, L.I.-10 Shousanli.

Internal Wind

Unilateral numbness of a limb, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated, or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai (Governing Vessel), Du-19 Houding, ST-32 Futu, G.B.-31 Fengshi, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli.

Wind-Phlegm

Unilateral numbness of a limb, tingling, tremors, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-16 Fengfu, S.I.-3 Houxi with BL-62 Shenmai (Governing Vessel),

Du-19 Houding, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-32 Futu, G.B.-31 Fengshi, L.I.-10 Shousanli, ST-36 Zusanli.

c) Other patterns

Dampness in the channels

Numbness/tingling, swollen joints, feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether Dampness is associated with Cold or Heat.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Numbness or tingling of the limbs, joint pain that is ameliorated by moderate exercise and aggravated by inactivity, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, slight shortness of breath, pale complexion, Bluish-Purple tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

6. NUMBNESS OF HALF THE BODY

Numbness of half the body usually occurs in the limbs.

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Numbness of half the body, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. This numbness often occurs on the left side and more frequently in women.

b) Damp-Phlegm

Numbness of half the body, chronic cough with expectoration of profuse, white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate, feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, blurred vision, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, muzziness of the head, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

c) Liver-Wind

Numbness of half the body and a hand, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, tics, Stiff, Deviated, or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse. This pattern is more likely to occur in old people. In the elderly, numbness of half the body may herald Wind-stroke.

d) Deficiency of Central Qi

Numbness of half the body, soft and weak limbs, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This pattern is due to a deficiency of Stomach and Spleen and the numbness often occurs on the right side.

e) Dampness

Numbness of half the body, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, swelling of the limbs and/or joints, muscle ache, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether the Dampness is associated with Cold or Heat.

7. ITCHING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

a) Full

Wind in the skin

Intense itching in the whole body or moving from place to place, more in the upper body, unbearable desire to scratch, dry skin.

Acupuncture

T.B.-6 Zhigou, L.I.-11 Quchi, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-31 Fengshi.

Dampness in the skin

Localized itching often in the lower part of the body; vesicles on the skin, oozing a fluid.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Damp-Heat in the skin

Localized itching, yellow vesicles oozing a yellow fluid; red papules or pustules, oozing blood on scratching; more in the lower part of the body.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Blood Heat

Generalized itching, red rash, red papules, feeling agitated, thirst.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, SP-10 Xuehai.

b) Empty

Blood deficiency

Mild generalized itching, dry skin, scaly skin (with white scales), dry hair, possibly pale wheals.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

c) Other patterns

Toxic Heat

Localized or generalized intense itching, pustules oozing pus and blood, festering skin, fever. This kind of itching is seen in chronic eczema when the skin becomes infected.



CLINICAL NOTE

To treat itching with acupuncture, apart from using points that expel Wind (T.B.-6 Zhigou, and G.B.-31 Fengshi), use points on the Heart channel.

8. OEDEMA

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapters 65](#) and [66](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 18](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 39](#).

a) Empty

Spleen-Yang deficiency

Chronic pitting oedema of the abdomen or limbs, slow onset, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after

eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, oedema. Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu. Moxa.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pitting oedema of the whole body starting from the legs, worse on the ankles; lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. This is probably the most common cause of chronic oedema, and it is nearly always associated with Spleen-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

b) Full

Dampness

Oedema of the limbs and abdomen, slow onset, tiredness, feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs, feeling of fullness of the epigastrium, ache in the muscles, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Qi stagnation

Non-pitting oedema of the body or limbs, irritability, feeling of distension, especially of the limbs, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zigou, Ren-6 Qihai.

c) Other patterns

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Oedema starting on the face and limbs, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations,

dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Wind-Water invading the Lungs

Sudden swelling of the eyes, face, and hands, gradually spreading to the whole body; bright-shiny complexion, scanty and pale urination, aversion to wind, fever, cough, slight breathlessness, sticky-white tongue coating, Floating-Slippery pulse. This is an acute type of oedema, and this pattern is a type of external Wind-Cold.

Qi deficiency and Blood stasis

Oedema of the body or limbs, cold hands and feet, numbness of the limbs, muscular weakness, purple colour of hands and/or feet, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, Bluish-Purple tongue, Choppy pulse.

9. OBESITY

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 1](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

Obesity in Chinese medicine is always due to Dampness or Phlegm (deriving from Qi or Yang deficiency) retained in the space between the skin and muscles.

a) Damp-Phlegm with Qi deficiency

Obesity, chronic cough with expectoration of profuse, white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate, feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, blurred vision, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, muzziness of the head, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, slight shortness of breath, pale complexion, Pale and Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

10. LOSS OF WEIGHT

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 1](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 37](#)

a) Yin deficiency

Loss of weight, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, dry throat in the evening, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. This may be Yin deficiency

of various organs such as the Lungs, Stomach, Heart, Kidneys, Liver, and Spleen.

b) Liver-Blood deficiency

Loss of weight, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Loss of weight, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. Normally Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency leads to obesity, but it may also lead to weight loss because the Food essences are not absorbed by the body.

d) Liver-Fire

Loss of weight, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

e) Stomach-Heat

Loss of weight, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

11. JAUNDICE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 3](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Jaundice, yellow eyes, bright-yellow complexion, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow sclera, scanty-dark-yellow urine, thirst without a desire to drink, bitter taste, irritability, headache, feeling of heaviness of the body, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating, either bilateral in two strips or unilateral, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Cold-Dampness in the Gall-Bladder

Jaundice, dull-yellow eyes and skin, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, dull-yellow sclera, turbid urine, no thirst, sticky taste, dull headache, feeling of heaviness of the body, feeling of cold, thick-sticky-white tongue coating, either bilateral in two strips or unilateral, Slippery-Wiry-Slow pulse.

c) Blood stasis

Jaundice, dull-yellow skin, dark complexion, feeling of a mass in the hypochondrium, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, lines on the skin like a spider's web, dark stools, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Spleen-Qi deficiency and Blood deficiency

Jaundice, dull, yellow skin, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. This pattern is due to Liver-Blood deficiency, which leads to Liver-Qi stagnation and bile not flowing; this is a Deficient-type of jaundice.

12. TWITCHING OF MUSCLES

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#)

a) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Twitching of muscles, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Heart- or Lung-Yang deficiency with Water Overflowing

Twitching of muscles, palpitations, dizziness, nausea, vomiting of white-watery-frothy fluid, feeling cold, cold

limbs, severe shortness of breath, feeling of fullness and stuffiness of the chest and epigastrium, thirst with no desire to drink, urinary retention, Pale, Swollen and wet tongue, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Fine-Slippery pulse.

c) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Twitching of muscles, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

13. OPISTHOTONOS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 4](#)

a) Liver-Wind

Opisthotonos, tremors, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, numbness of limbs, tics, Stiff, Deviated, or Moving tongue, Wiry pulse.

Digestive System and Taste

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This chapter will be divided into the following two sections:

- Digestive system
- Taste

The symptoms of epigastric and abdominal pain are discussed in [Chapter 71](#), Abdomen.

DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

The following digestive symptoms are discussed below:

1. Belching
2. Sour regurgitation
3. Hiccup
4. Poor appetite
5. Nausea
6. Vomiting
7. Retching
8. Vomiting of blood
9. Excessive hunger
10. Aversion to food
11. Hunger with no desire to eat
12. Gnawing hunger
13. Sleepy after eating
14. Regurgitation of food
15. Difficulty in swallowing (Diaphragm Choking)
16. Craving for sweets and/or constant picking

1. BELCHING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#); Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Full

Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Belching with loud sound, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and pain, a feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, hiccup, nausea, vomiting, sighing, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), Pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, ST-21 Liangmen, Ren-13 Shangwan, P-6 Neiguan.

b) Empty

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Belching with weak sound, slight nausea, vomiting of thin-watery fluids, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, Ren-10 Xiawan.

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Belching with weak sound, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-10 Xiawan.

c) Other patterns

Stomach-Heat

Belching with loud sound, sour regurgitation, burning epigastric pain, thirst, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Retention of food

Belching with loud sound, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, vomiting of sour fluids, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippy pulse.

Stomach deficient and Cold

Belching with weak sound, vomiting of clear fluid, discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium, better after eating and better with pressure or massage, no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods,

no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

2. ACID REFLUX

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#); Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Full

Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Acid reflux, feeling of burning in the stomach coming in bouts, belching, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and pain, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, hiccup, belching, nausea, vomiting, sighing, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), Pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, ST-21 Liangmen, Ren-13 Shangwan, P-6 Neiguan.

b) Empty

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Acid reflux, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-10 Xiawan.

c) Other patterns

Retention of food

Acid reflux, vomiting of sour fluids, belching, fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, nausea, foul breath, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippy pulse.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Acid reflux, nausea, feeling of fullness and pain in the epigastrium, feeling of heaviness, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, thirst without a desire to drink, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Cold-Dampness in the Stomach

Acid reflux, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

3. HICCUP

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Cold in the Stomach

Forceful hiccup, nausea; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; severe pain in the epigastrium, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth, vomiting of clear fluids (which may alleviate the pain), preference for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

b) Stomach-Heat

Forceful hiccup, sour regurgitation, burning epigastric pain, thirst, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach-Qi deficiency

Weak, infrequent hiccup with low sound, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness especially in the morning, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

d) Stomach-Yin deficiency

Weak hiccup, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or

a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

e) Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Pronounced hiccup, sour regurgitation, feeling of burning in the stomach coming in bouts, belching, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and pain, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, belching, nausea, vomiting, sighing, weak limbs, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), Pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

f) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Incessant hiccup, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

4. POOR APPETITE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

Poor appetite is an important symptom in Chinese medicine frequently reported by Chinese patients; this is partially a culturally-determined symptom, given the history of frequent famines in China. Western patients seldom report this symptom spontaneously, and we must therefore remember to ask always about appetite. In China, poor appetite is often a symptom of sadness and unhappiness; in contrast, Westerners tend to eat more when they are unhappy or depressed.

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Stomach and Spleen Deficient and Cold

Poor appetite, dull epigastric pain that is alleviated by warm liquids and aggravated by cold liquids, vomiting of thin-watery fluids, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, cold limbs, feeling cold, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Poor appetite, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Stomach-Yin deficiency

Poor appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

e) Cold-Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen

Poor appetite, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

f) Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Poor appetite, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

g) Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Poor appetite, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and pain, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, hiccup, belching, nausea, vomiting, sighing, weak limbs, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), Pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

h) Phlegm obstructing the Stomach

Poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sputum in the throat, sticky taste, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

i) Food poisoning

Poor appetite, vomiting, sour regurgitation, epigastric fullness and pain, thick tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

5. NAUSEA

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

a) Full

Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Nausea, vomiting, belching, hiccup, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and pain, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, sighing, weak limbs, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), Pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, ST-21 Liangmen, Ren-13 Shangwan, P-6 Neiguan.

Phlegm obstructing the Stomach

Nausea, vomiting, poor appetite, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sputum in the throat, sticky taste, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-13 Shangwan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-40 Fenglong, P-6 Neiguan, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-22 Guanmen.

Cold-Dampness in the Stomach

Nausea, poor appetite, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-13 Shangwan, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-21 Liangmen, ST-22 Guanmen, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan. Moxa.

Cold in the Stomach

Nausea, epigastric pain aggravated by cold liquids and alleviated by warm liquids, vomiting of thin-watery fluid, dribbling from the mouth, hiccup, nausea; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited, severe pain in the epigastrium, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth, preference for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-13 Shangwan, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-21 Liangmen. Moxa.

b) Empty

Stomach-Qi deficiency

Very slight nausea, especially in the morning, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness especially in the morning, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-10 Xiawan, ST-36 Zusanli, BL-21 Weishu.

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Slight nausea, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-10 Xiawan.

c) Other patterns

Stomach-Heat

Nausea, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Food poisoning

Nausea aggravated by the smell of food, vomiting, epigastric fullness and pain alleviated by vomiting, thick tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Heart-Qi stagnation

Nausea that is aggravated by emotional stress, palpitations, feeling of oppression of the chest, depression, slight feeling of a lump in the throat, slight shortness of breath, sighing, poor appetite, chest and epigastric distension, dislike of lying down, weak and cold limbs, slightly purple lips, pale complexion, tongue slightly Pale-Purple on the sides in the chest area, pulse Empty but very slightly Overflowing on the Left-Front position.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: nausea is not always due to Stomach-Qi not descending. It may also be due to Heart-Qi not descending (from emotional stress) and frequently to Phlegm obstructing the Middle Burner.

6. VOMITING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#); Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

There are several Chinese terms referring to nausea and vomiting, expressing varying characteristics or degrees of severity. The Chinese term *e xin* means 'nausea'; *ou* means vomiting with a sound; *tu* means vomiting without a sound; *gan ou* indicates short retching with a low sound; *yue* indicates long retching with a loud sound (before the Ming dynasty, this term indicated 'hiccup'). The two Chinese terms *ou* and *tu* are usually used together to indicate vomiting. The points for vomiting are the same as those indicated above for nausea.

a) Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Vomiting with loud sound, nausea, belching, hiccup, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and

pain, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, sighing, weak limbs, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), Pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

b) Cold in the Stomach

Vomiting of thin-watery fluids with low sound, dribbling from the mouth, hiccup, nausea, epigastric pain aggravated by cold liquids and alleviated by warm liquids; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; severe pain in the epigastrium, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth and for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

c) Stomach-Heat

Vomiting with loud sound soon after eating, belching, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, burning epigastric pain, thirst, excessive hunger, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Stomach-Qi deficiency

Vomiting with low sound, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness, especially in the morning, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

e) Stomach deficient and Cold

Vomiting with low sound or vomiting of clear fluids; discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium, better after eating and better with pressure or massage; no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

f) Stomach-Yin deficiency

Vomiting of thin fluids with low sound, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue

without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

g) Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder

Vomiting of bitter fluids, headache, thirst, dizziness, tinnitus, bitter taste, dry throat, irritability, red face and ears, hypochondrial fullness, unilateral or bilateral yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

h) Stomach- and Liver-Fire

Vomiting, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, feeling of heat, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

i) External Cold invading the Stomach

Sudden vomiting, epigastric pain aggravated by cold liquids and alleviated by warm liquids, vomiting of thin-watery fluid, dribbling from the mouth, hiccup, nausea; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; severe pain in the epigastrium, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth, preference for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

j) Phlegm obstructing the Stomach

Vomiting, nausea, poor appetite, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sputum in the throat, sticky taste, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

k) Cold-Dampness in the Stomach

Vomiting, nausea, poor appetite, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

l) Retention of Food

Vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, nausea, fullness, pain and distension of the

epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippy pulse.

m) Food poisoning

Vomiting, epigastric fullness and pain that is relieved by vomiting, sour regurgitation, belching, nausea at the smell of food, thick tongue coating, Slippy pulse.

7. RETCHING

Retching indicates the attempt and the sound of vomiting but without bringing up food. In Chinese it is called *gan ou*, indicating short retching with a low sound, or *yue*, indicating long retching with a loud sound.

a) Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Retching with a loud sound coming in bouts according to emotional state, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension, pulse Wiry on both Middle positions.

b) Stomach-Heat

Retching with a loud sound, sour regurgitation, nausea, burning epigastric pain, thirst, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Cold in the Stomach

Retching with a low sound, vomiting of thin-watery fluids, hiccup, nausea, epigastric pain aggravated by cold liquids and alleviated by warm liquids, dribbling from the mouth; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; severe pain in the epigastrium, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth and for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

d) Retention of Food

Retching with a loud sound, nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, sour regurgitation, foul breath, belching; fullness, pain, and distension of the epigastrium, which are relieved by vomiting; insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippy pulse.

e) Spleen-Yin deficiency

Slight retching with a low sound, poor appetite, poor digestion, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth, dry lips, dry stools, thin body; sallow complexion, possibly with red tip of the nose; tongue with transversal cracks on the sides, Weak or Floating-Empty pulse.

8. VOMITING OF BLOOD

a) Stomach-Fire

Vomiting of food with bright-red or dark-red blood, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver-Fire invading the Stomach

Vomiting of bright-red blood, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, epigastric and hypochondrial pain, insomnia, Red tongue with redder sides and yellow coating, Rapid-Wiry pulse.

c) Blood stasis in the Stomach

Vomiting of very dark blood that may look like coffee grounds, severe, stabbing epigastric pain that may be worse at night, dislike of pressure, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Vomiting of fresh red blood, feeling of hunger but no desire to eat, bleeding gums, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, constipation (dry stools), dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Heart- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Vomiting of bright red blood in small quantities, dull epigastric pain alleviated by pressure, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, spontaneous sweating, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

f) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Vomiting of fresh red blood in small amounts, lingering chronic disease, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

9. EXCESSIVE HUNGER

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

a) Stomach-Heat

Excessive hunger, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Stomach-Fire

Excessive hunger, bleeding gums, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, foul breath, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, burning epigastric pain, mental restlessness, mouth ulcers, dry stools, sour regurgitation, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Excessive hunger but no desire to eat, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, constipation (dry stools), dry mouth and throat, especially in

the afternoon, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

10. AVERSION TO FOOD

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

'Aversion to food' is different from 'poor appetite' because it implies not only no desire to eat, but also being disgusted at the sight and smell of food.

a) Food poisoning

Strong, acute aversion to food, nausea at the smell of food, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea with foul smell, sticky taste, epigastric pain, thick-sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

b) Retention of Food

Chronic aversion to food, nausea at the smell of food, sour regurgitation, sticky taste, nausea, fullness and pain of the epigastrium, restless sleep, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Liver, Gall-Bladder, Stomach, and Spleen

Chronic aversion to food, nausea at the smell of food, sticky taste, thirst, hypochondrial and epigastric fullness, nausea, irritability, feeling of heaviness, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

d) Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel in pregnancy

Aversion to food during pregnancy, nausea at the smell of food, nausea, feeling of energy rising to the chest, restlessness, anxiety, feeling of tightness of the chest, Firm pulse.

11. HUNGER WITH NO DESIRE TO EAT

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Hunger with no desire to eat, feeling of fullness of the epigastrium and/or abdomen, epigastric and/or abdominal pain, sticky taste, feeling of heaviness of the body, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, feeling of heat, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) 'Stomach strong – Spleen weak'

Hunger with no desire to eat, thirst, burning epigastric pain, loose stools, tiredness. This condition is characterized by the Full Stomach pattern (usually Heat), which causes the hunger, and an Empty Spleen pattern, which removes the desire to eat.

12. GNAWING HUNGER

'Gnawing hunger' is a translation of the Chinese term *cao za*, which literally means 'noisy', but the symptoms of this condition do not actually involve a gurgling noise. Chinese books usually explain that this condition is characterised by an uncomfortable sensation of the epigastrium that mimics pain but is not actually pain and mimics hunger but is not actually hunger; it also includes a vexed sensation felt in the epigastrium and a feeling of stuffiness of the epigastrium. This condition may also be accompanied by belching and sour regurgitation.

a) Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Gnawing hunger, sour regurgitation, hiccup, belching, nausea, vomiting, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and pain, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sighing, weak limbs, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), Pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

b) Stomach-Heat

Gnawing hunger, sour regurgitation, nausea, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, thirst, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Cold in the Stomach

Gnawing hunger, nausea, vomiting of thin-watery fluids, hiccup, epigastric pain aggravated by cold liquids and alleviated by warm liquids, dribbling from the mouth; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; severe pain in the epigastrium, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth and for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

d) Food poisoning

Gnawing hunger, belching, nausea, vomiting, epigastric pain and fullness that is relieved by vomiting, thick tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

e) Spleen-Yin deficiency

Slight gnawing hunger, poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth, dry lips, dry stools, thin body, sallow complexion, possibly with red tip of the nose, tongue with transverse cracks on the sides, Weak or Floating-Empty pulse.

Case History

A 50-year-old woman complained of a 'bad' taste in her mouth (this was the first symptom she reported), a feeling of nausea, either poor appetite or always hungry, and a feeling of fullness of the epigastrium for the past 20 years. When questioned further, she said '*I feel sick when I eat but also when I am hungry; I always want to eat in the late evening.*' She also complained of abdominal distension and alternation of constipation and diarrhoea. She also felt tired, could not concentrate well, and suffered from poor memory. Mentally, she felt depressed and often weepy. Her tongue was Purple and her pulse was Wiry.

This is a good example of a case of *cao za*; that is, 'Gnawing Hunger' as described above, deriving from Liver-Qi stagnation. The characteristic symptom is that of '*feeling sick when she eats but also when she is hungry*'; this corresponds to the description of this condition in Chinese books, which state that the condition *mimics hunger but is not hunger*.

13. SLEEPY AFTER EATING

a) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Sleepiness after eating, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Damp-Phlegm in the Spleen

Sleepiness after eating, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, feeling of oppression or fullness of the chest and epigastrium, dizziness, blurred vision, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

c) Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Sleepiness after eating, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, abdominal fullness, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

14. REGURGITATION OF FOOD

'Regurgitation of food', called *fan wei* in Chinese (meaning 'stomach reflux'), is characterised by food entering the stomach, not being digested, and being regurgitated; this is different from vomiting. Regurgitation of food can take different forms; sometimes the patient may regurgitate the food eaten in the morning; sometimes he or she may regurgitate in the morning the food eaten the previous evening; sometimes the patient may regurgitate food 1 or 2 hours after eating; sometimes there may be regurgitation only at night.

a) Cold in the Stomach

Regurgitation of thin-watery fluids, nausea, hiccup, epigastric pain aggravated by cold liquids and alleviated by warm liquids, dribbling from the mouth; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; severe pain in the epigastrium, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth and for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

b) Stagnation of Qi and Phlegm in the Stomach

Regurgitation of food and phlegm, belching, nausea, vomiting, hiccup, epigastric pain and distension, feeling of oppression of the chest, irritability, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Regurgitation of food, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Stasis of Blood in the Stomach

Regurgitation of food and occasionally blood, nausea; vomiting, possibly vomiting of blood; vomiting of food looking like coffee-grounds, severe, stabbing epigastric pain that may be worse at night, dislike of pressure, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

e) Retention of food

Regurgitation of food, sour regurgitation, sticky taste, nausea, fullness and pain of the epigastrium, restless sleep, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

f) Stomach-Yin deficiency with Blood dryness

Sour regurgitation, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, insomnia, dry skin, dull complexion, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

g) Deficiency of Qi and Yin of the Stomach

Slight regurgitation of food, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink

or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, loose stools, tiredness especially in the morning, weak limbs, Pale tongue without coating in the centre, Empty pulse or Floating-Empty pulse.

h) Deficiency of Minister Fire

Regurgitation of thin-watery fluids, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, lack of libido, infertility, sterility, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

15. DIFFICULTY IN SWALLOWING (DIAPHRAGM CHOKING)

‘Diaphragm choking’ is a translation of the Chinese term *ye ge*; *ye* means ‘choking’ and *ge* literally means ‘diaphragm’, and in this context it indicates severe difficulty in swallowing. In fact, *ye* by itself indicates a mild degree of this condition, whereas *ge* indicates a severe degree; one could also say that *ye* is the beginning stage of a condition that later develops into *ge*. This condition is characterised by difficulty in swallowing, a feeling of obstruction in the oesophagus and diaphragm, and a feeling that the food cannot go down; it usually affects the elderly (especially men), and it is rare in young people.

The condition of ‘diaphragm choking’ (*ye ge*) should be differentiated from ‘regurgitation of food’ (*fan wei*): ‘Diaphragm choking’ is centred in the oesophagus and therefore above the neck of the stomach, and it indicates that the food cannot enter the stomach, causing difficulty in swallowing and a feeling of obstruction; ‘regurgitation of food’ is centred in the stomach itself and indicates that the food is regurgitated some hours after entering the stomach.

‘Diaphragm choking’ should also be differentiated from the ‘Plum Stone Syndrome’, which is characterised by a feeling of obstruction in the *throat* without any actual regurgitation of food.

‘Diaphragm choking’ often corresponds to the Western condition of hiatus hernia or, in more serious cases, to carcinoma of the oesophagus.

a) Stagnation of Qi and Phlegm

Difficulty in swallowing when tense, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of

a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Blood stasis in the Stomach

Difficulty in swallowing, severe, stabbing epigastric pain that may be worse at night, dislike of pressure, nausea; vomiting, possibly vomiting of blood; vomiting of food looking like coffee-grounds, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Qi and Yang deficiency of the Stomach

Slight difficulty in swallowing, vomiting of thin-watery fluids, discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium that is better after eating and better with pressure or massage, no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

d) Stomach-Yin deficiency

Slight difficulty in swallowing, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

e) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Chronic, slight difficulty in swallowing, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

16. CRAVING FOR SWEETS AND/OR CONSTANT PICKING

a) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Craving for sweets when tired, constant picking, tendency to obesity, sweet taste, loss of taste, irregular appetite,

poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Heart-Blood deficiency

Craving for sweets when upset, constant picking, irregular appetite, sadness, depression, loneliness, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Heart-Fire

Craving for sweets when worried, constant picking, hunger, irregular appetite, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Craving for sweets that is worse pre-menstrually, constant picking, irregular appetite, alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, epigastric and abdominal distension, irritability, moodiness, depression, tiredness, pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

e) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Craving for sweets when tired, constant picking, irregular appetite, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

f) Spleen-Heat

Craving for sweets, constant picking, hunger, burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

TASTE

The following tastes are discussed:

17. Bitter taste
18. Sweet taste
19. Salty taste
20. Sour taste
21. Sticky sensation in the mouth
22. Loss of taste
23. Foul breath

17. BITTER TASTE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

A 'bitter' taste is a symptom that is very frequently reported by Chinese patients. In Chinese culture, this symptom is very closely identified with emotional problems also because the word 'bitter' in Chinese is often used in that sense; in fact, when a Chinese patient complains of bitter taste, it almost always indicates emotional problems or serious difficulties in the patient's life. In the West there is no such correlation between this particular symptom and emotional problems.

a) Liver-Fire

Bitter taste throughout the day, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Heart-Fire

Bitter taste in the morning especially after a bad night's sleep, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

The difference between the bitter taste caused by Liver-Fire and that caused by Heart-Fire is that the former persists throughout the day, whereas the latter is only experienced in the morning after a bad night's sleep.

c) Damp-Heat in the Liver and Gall-Bladder

Bitter and sticky taste; fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or epigastrium; poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Lesser-Yang Pattern

Bitter taste, alternation of aversion to cold and feeling of heat, headache, irritability, blurred vision, dry throat, hypochondrial pain, tongue with unilateral coating, Wiry pulse. This is the Lesser-Yang Pattern within the Identification of Patterns according to the Six Stages.

18. SWEET TASTE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

a) Deficiency of Qi and/or Yin of the Stomach and Spleen

Sweet taste, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, dry mouth, night-sweating. The tongue and pulse presentation depends on whether Qi or Yin deficiency predominates.

b) Damp-Heat in the Spleen

Sweet taste or a sticky taste, feeling of fullness of the epigastrium and/or abdomen, epigastric and/or abdominal pain, poor appetite, feeling of heaviness of the body, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach- and Spleen-Heat

Sweet taste, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, dry stools, scanty-dark urine, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

19. SALTY TASTE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

The salty taste is not very common in practice, and very few patients will ever complain of this particular symptom.

a) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Salty taste, dry throat and mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Salty taste, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

20. SOUR TASTE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

a) Liver-Fire

A sour (or bitter) taste, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Sour taste, sour regurgitation, belching, epigastric fullness and distension, poor appetite, tiredness,

alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, pulse Weak on the right and Wiry on the left.

c) Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Sour taste, sour regurgitation, irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and pain, feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, hiccup, belching, nausea, vomiting, sighing, weak limbs, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

d) Retention of Food

Sour taste, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippery pulse.

e) Stomach Heat

Sour taste, thirst, epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

21. STICKY SENSATION IN THE MOUTH

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

Western patients often describe the sticky taste as a 'metallic' taste.

a) Cold-Dampness

Sticky sensation in the mouth, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

b) Damp-Heat

Sticky sensation in the mouth, thirst with no desire to drink, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling of heat, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Phlegm

Sticky sensation in the mouth, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Sticky sensation in the mouth, thirst with no desire to drink; barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum; shortness of breath, wheezing, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heat, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

22. LOSS OF TASTE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 30](#)

a) Deficiency of Stomach- and Spleen-Qi

Gradual loss of taste and possibly smell, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Dampness obstructing the Middle Burner

Loss of taste, abdominal fullness and distension, poor appetite, no desire to drink, sleepiness after eating, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

c) Damp-Phlegm obstructing the Spleen

Loss of taste, epigastric and abdominal fullness, feeling of oppression of the chest, poor appetite, nausea, tiredness, feeling of heaviness, sputum in the throat, loose stools, sleepiness after eating, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Cold in the Stomach

Loss of sense of taste, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, loose stools, discomfort or dull pain in the

epigastrium that is better after eating and better with pressure or massage, preference for warm drinks and foods, vomiting of clear fluids, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

23. FOUL BREATH

a) Stomach-Heat

Foul breath, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Foul breath, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink; barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green

sputum; shortness of breath, wheezing, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heat, insomnia, agitation, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Retention of food

Foul breath, sour taste, belching, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippery pulse.

Thirst and Drink

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The following symptoms are discussed:

1. Thirst
2. Dry mouth
3. Absence of thirst
4. Increased salivation

1. THIRST

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 32](#)

a) Full

Stomach-Heat

Thirst with a desire to drink cold fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, burning epigastric pain, nausea, excessive hunger, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Liver-Fire

Thirst, bitter taste, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, headache, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Heart-Fire

Thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, palpitations, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen

Thirst with no desire to drink, sticky taste, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, feeling of heaviness, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu.

b) Empty

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Slight thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dry mouth, dull epigastric pain, poor appetite, tongue of a normal colour without coating in the centre.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Thirst with a desire to drink in small sips that is more pronounced in the evening, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, constipation (dry stools), feeling of hunger but no desire to eat, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-44 Neiting.

c) Other patterns

Damp-Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder

Thirst, bitter taste; fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or epigastrium; poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Thirst without a desire to drink, barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heat, insomnia, agitation, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Thirst with a desire to sip fluids that is more pronounced in the evening, dry mouth and throat, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Lung-Heat

Thirst with a desire to drink cold water, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight thirst with a desire to drink in small sips that is more pronounced in the evening, dry mouth and throat at night, dry cough or with scanty, sticky sputum that could be blood tinged, weak and/or hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thin body or thin chest, insomnia, anxiety, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid tongue.

Heart-Yin deficiency

Slight thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dry mouth and throat, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Slight thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Slight thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Lung-Yin deficiency

Slight thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

It is often difficult to establish whether a patient suffers from excessive 'thirst' due to the widespread habit of forcing oneself to drink large amounts of water.

2. DRY MOUTH

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 32](#)

a) Yin deficiency

Dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, dry throat in the evening, night-sweating, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which could be the Stomach, Lungs, Liver, Kidneys, Heart, or Spleen.

b) Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Dry mouth with no desire to drink, thirst without a desire to drink, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, feeling of heaviness, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Phlegm-Heat in the Stomach

Dry mouth with no desire to drink, thirst, foul breath, burning epigastric pain, mental restlessness, bleeding gums, dry stools, mouth ulcers, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, excessive hunger, feeling of heat, feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, insomnia, tongue Red in the centre with a sticky-yellow coating and a Stomach crack with a rough, sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

3. ABSENCE OF THIRST

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 32](#)

a) Deficiency of Yang of the Spleen and Stomach

Absence of thirst, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness

of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, oedema. Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Cold in the Stomach

Absence of thirst, severe pain in the epigastrium, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth, vomiting of clear fluids (which may alleviate the pain), nausea; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

c) Dampness in the Stomach and Spleen

No desire to drink, sticky taste, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, feeling of heaviness, nausea, loose stools, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: always ask about 'absence of thirst'; no patient will report that spontaneously. This is also often difficult to establish due to the widespread habit of drinking large amounts of water.

4. INCREASED SALIVATION

a) Stomach and Spleen Deficient and Cold

Increased salivation, preference for warm drinks and foods, discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium that is better after eating and better with pressure or massage, no appetite, vomiting of clear fluid, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency, Water overflowing

Increased salivation, oedema, especially of the legs and ankles, cold feeling in the legs and back, fullness and distension of the abdomen, soreness of the lower back, feeling cold, scanty-clear urination, palpitations, breathlessness, cold hands, Pale and Swollen tongue with a wet-white coating, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

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INTRODUCTION

Although the headings below refer primarily to pain in various areas of the abdomen, other sensations may be experienced in each of those areas; these are primarily distension, oppression, fullness, or stuffiness. The clinical significance of these sensations is briefly explained below. For a fuller explanation, see Part 2 Interrogation, in [Chapter 38](#).

Distension

A feeling of abdominal distension (usually called 'bloating' in English) may indicate the following patterns:

- Qi stagnation – severe distension
- Spleen-Qi deficiency – mild distension
- Damp-Phlegm

Besides the subjective feeling of bloating, distension is characterized by an objective, distended, drum-like feeling on palpation. It can also be seen on observation; that is, the abdomen is visibly distended.

Feeling of oppression

A feeling of oppression (called *men* in Chinese) usually indicates Phlegm, but it may also indicate severe Qi stagnation. The feeling of oppression is purely subjective, and there is nothing to be seen or palpated.

The following abdominal symptoms are discussed:

1. Pain in the area below the xyphoid process
2. Epigastric pain
3. Hypochondrial pain
4. Umbilical pain
5. Abdominal distension

Feeling of fullness

A feeling of fullness in the abdomen is usually caused by Dampness or retention of food. Subjectively the patient feels full, as if having had a large meal, and there is a very slight feeling of nausea; objectively the abdomen feels hard on palpation.

Feeling of stuffiness

'Stuffiness' is a translation of the Chinese term *pi* (although this term has a broader meaning than simply 'feeling of stuffiness'). A feeling of stuffiness in the abdomen is characterized by a subjective mild feeling of fullness, together with an objective soft feeling of the abdomen on palpation. There is nothing to be seen on observation. This symptom is usually due either to Dampness or to Heat occurring against a background of Deficiency.

1. PAIN IN THE AREA BELOW THE XYPHOID PROCESS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

a) Rebellious-Qi of the Penetrating Vessel

Pain below the xyphoid process with a feeling of tightness, feeling of heat in the face, feeling of a lump in the throat, palpitations, anxiety, feeling of tightness of the chest, nausea, slight breathlessness, epigastric fullness or stuffiness, umbilical and abdominal fullness, irregular and/or painful periods, feeling of energy rising in the abdomen to the chest, Firm pulse.

b) Stomach-Heat

Pain below the xyphoid process, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach-Qi stagnation

Pain below the xyphoid process with a feeling of distension, epigastric pain and distension, belching, nausea, vomiting, hiccup, irritability, pulse Wiry on the Right-Middle position.

d) Heart-Qi stagnation

Pain below the xyphoid process with a feeling of distension, palpitations, feeling of oppression of the chest, depression, slight feeling of a lump in the throat, slight shortness of breath, sighing, poor appetite, chest and epigastric distension, dislike of lying down, weak and cold limbs, slightly purple lips, pale complexion, tongue slightly Pale-Purple on the sides in the chest area, pulse Empty but very slightly Overflowing on the Left-Front position.

e) Retention of food in the stomach

Pain below the xyphoid process with a feeling of fullness, fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippy pulse.

f) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency with Heart-Heat

Pain below the xyphoid process with a feeling of stuffiness, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing and Rapid pulse.

g) Phlegm in the Stomach

Pain below the xyphoid process with a feeling of oppression, feeling of oppression in the epigastrium, nausea, sputum in the throat, nausea, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

h) Qi stagnation and Phlegm

Pain below the xyphoid process with a feeling of oppression and distension, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of a lump in the throat, sighing, sputum in the throat, irritability, Swollen tongue, Wiry or Slippery pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

In my experience, repressed feelings are often 'stored' in the area below the xyphoid process; this often manifests with a hardness in this area on palpation.

2. EPIGASTRIC PAIN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

The regions of abdominal pain in Chinese medicine are as follows:

- Area under the heart (this is the small area immediately below the xyphoid process extending approximately 2 inches and bordered by the ribs).
- Epigastric (this is the area between the xyphoid process and the umbilicus but excluding the hypochondrial area).
- Hypochondrial (these are the two areas below the rib cage).
- Umbilical (this is the area around the umbilicus).
- Central-lower abdominal (this is the central area of the abdomen between the umbilicus and the symphysis pubis).
- Lateral-lower abdominal (these are the lateral areas of the lower abdomen).

a) Empty

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Dull epigastric pain that is alleviated by eating and pressure coming in bouts, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, ST-34 Liangqiu.

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Dull epigastric pain, poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, dry mouth, dry lips, dry stools, thin body, sallow complexion with possibly a red tip of the nose, night-sweating, tongue with transversal cracks on the sides, Weak or Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-34 Liangqiu.

b) Full

Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Epigastric pain and distension extending to the hypochondrium, irritability, a feeling of oppression of the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, hiccup, belching, nausea, vomiting, sighing, weak limbs, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-34 Liangqiu.

Cold in the Stomach

Severe, sudden-onset, spastic epigastric pain that is alleviated by drinking warm liquids and aggravated by drinking cold liquids, feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth, vomiting of clear fluids (which may alleviate the pain), nausea; feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids, which are quickly vomited; preference for warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-34 Liangqiu, BL-21 Weishu. Moxa.

Stomach-Heat

Burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-34 Liangqiu.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Epigastric pain, feeling of fullness of the epigastrium, feeling of heaviness, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, thirst without desire to drink,

nausea, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-34 Liangqiu.

c) Other patterns

Stomach-Fire

Burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, feeling of heat, sour regurgitation, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Cold-Dampness in the Stomach

Epigastric pain that is aggravated by drinking cold liquids and ameliorated by drinking warm liquids, poor appetite, feeling of fullness of the epigastrium, feeling of cold in the epigastrium, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, sweetish taste or absence of taste, no thirst, loose stools, tiredness, lassitude, nausea, oedema, dull-white complexion, excessive white vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Blood stasis in the Stomach

Severe, stabbing epigastric pain that may be worse at night, dislike of pressure, nausea, vomiting, possibly vomiting of blood, vomiting of food looking like coffee-grounds, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Phlegm-Heat in the Stomach

Burning epigastric pain, thirst without a desire to drink, mental restlessness, bleeding gums, dry stools, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, insomnia, tongue Red in the centre with a sticky-yellow coating and a Stomach crack with a rough, sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Retention of food

Epigastric pain, distension and fullness that are relieved by vomiting; nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, insomnia, loose stools or

constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippery pulse.

Liver-Fire invading the Stomach

Burning epigastric pain, distension and fullness, irritability, sour regurgitation, hiccup, belching, nausea, vomiting, sighing, weak limbs, tongue Red on the sides, pulse Wiry-Rapid and Weak on the right.

Phlegm-Fluids in the Stomach

Dull epigastric pain, abdominal fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting of watery fluids, dry mouth without desire to drink, shortness of breath, dizziness, feeling of oppression of the chest, swelling of the limbs, expectoration of thin-watery sputum, inability to lie down, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry or Deep-Slippery pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Liver-Qi invading the Stomach is probably the most common cause of epigastric pain.

3. HYPOCHONDRIAL PAIN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

This refers to pain in the two lateral areas of the upper abdomen, below the rib cage.

a) Full

Liver-Qi stagnation

Hypochondrial pain and distension without a fixed location and coming and going according to the emotional state, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-24 Riyue.

Damp-Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder

Hypochondrial pain, distension, and fullness; bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, G.B.-43 Xiashi, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-11 Quchi, G.B.-24 Riyue.

b) Other patterns

Liver-Blood stasis

Stabbing hypochondrial pain with fixed location that is worse at night, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Dull hypochondrial pain that is alleviated by rest, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, blurred vision, floaters in the eyes, dry eyes, diminished night-vision, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion without lustre but with red cheekbones, muscular weakness, cramps, withered and brittle nails, very dry skin and hair, night-sweating, depression, feeling of aimlessness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Lesser-Yang syndrome

Hypochondrial pain and distension, alternation of chills and feeling of heat, bitter taste, dry throat, blurred vision, irritability, nausea, unilateral sticky tongue coating, Wiry pulse.

Phlegm-Fluids in the hypochondrium

Hypochondrial pain that is worse on coughing and breathing, feeling of distension and pulling of the hypochondrium, shortness of breath, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Slippery-Wiry pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Never ask a patient about pain in the 'hypochondrium' (as he or she may not know what area you mean); rather, point to the area you mean.

4. UMBILICAL PAIN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

This refers to pain in the area around the umbilicus; pain in this area is common in children.

a) Stagnation of Qi in the Stomach and Intestines

Umbilical pain and distension, epigastric pain and distension, belching, nausea, vomiting, hiccup, irritability, pulse Wiry on the Right-Middle position.

b) Cold in the Intestines

Spastic umbilical pain that is aggravated by cold liquids and alleviated by hot liquids, diarrhoea with pain, feeling of cold, cold sensation in the abdomen, tongue with thick-white coating, Deep-Wiry pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Umbilical pain that is not relieved by a bowel movement, diarrhoea, mucus and blood in stools, offensive odour of stools, burning in the anus, scanty-dark urine, fever, sweating that does not decrease the fever, a feeling of heat, thirst without a desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dull umbilical pain that comes and goes, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

e) Food poisoning

Severe umbilical pain, belching, nausea, vomiting, loose stools, thick tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

f) Heat in Bright Yang

Burning umbilical pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, feeling of heat, sour regurgitation, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse. This corresponds to either the Organ pattern of the Bright-Yang Heat within the Identification of Patterns according

to the Six Stages or to the pattern of Dry Heat in the Intestines within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels.



CLINICAL NOTE

Umbilical pain is more common in children than adults.

5. ABDOMINAL DISTENSION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

‘Distension’ (in Chinese called *zhang*) is a word frequently used by Chinese patients; Western patients will seldom use this word, and in English-speaking countries they might say ‘bloating’ or ‘bursting’ to express this symptom. Distension is a subjective feeling of the patient but also an objective sign; that is, the abdomen feels distended and hard, like a drum, on palpation, and it may also be observed to be ‘distended’.

Distension is the classic symptom of Qi stagnation; indeed, if there is a feeling of distension, there is Qi stagnation. However, a feeling of distension may also be associated with Damp-Phlegm and, in a few cases, with a deficiency of Qi.

a) Full

Liver-Qi stagnation

Abdominal distension that comes and goes according to emotional moods, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong.

b) Empty

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Slight abdominal distension after eating, poor appetite, tiredness, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu.

c) Other patterns

Damp-Phlegm obstructing the Spleen

Abdominal distension, a pronounced feeling of distension and oppression of the chest and epigastrium, sputum in the throat, feeling of heaviness, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Slight abdominal and hypochondrial distension, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, dry hair, dry nails, insomnia, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Abdominal distension is one of the most common symptoms of all. Remember that, in English, no patient will use the word ‘distension’, but usually ‘bloating’.

6. ABDOMINAL FULLNESS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

‘Fullness’ (called *man* in Chinese) indicates a feeling of fullness in the abdomen or epigastrium; this is different than the feeling of distension, both from a subjective and an objective point of view. ‘Distension’ indicates a subjective feeling of bloating; the abdomen feels distended and hard, like a drum, on palpation. ‘Fullness’ indicates a subjective feeling of fullness and obstruction similar to what one feels after eating too much. With ‘fullness’, the abdomen feels hard on palpation but not distended like a drum. A feeling of fullness generally indicates Dampness or retention of food.

a) Cold-Dampness in the Intestines

Abdominal fullness, abdomen hard and cold on palpation, cold limbs, nausea, vomiting, loose stools, sticky-white tongue coating, Soft-Slow or Slippery-Slow pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Abdominal fullness, abdomen feels hard on palpation, nausea, vomiting, irritability, thirst with no desire to drink, foul-smelling stools, mucus in stools, dark urine, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Retention of Food

Epigastric fullness, epigastrium feels hard on palpation, nausea, sour regurgitation, belching, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Stomach and Spleen Deficient and Cold

Slight abdominal fullness that comes and goes, abdomen not too hard on palpation, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

e) Heat in Bright Yang (Organ pattern)

Umbilical fullness and pain, fever, sweating, intense thirst, constipation, dry stools, Red tongue with dry-yellow or brown coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse. This corresponds to either the Organ pattern of the Bright-Yang Heat within the Identification of Patterns according to the Six Stages or to the pattern of Dry Heat in the Intestines within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels.



CLINICAL NOTE

It is important to explain to patients what we mean by 'fullness' and how it differs from 'distension'.

7. FEELING OF COLD IN THE ABDOMEN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

This indicates both a subjective feeling of cold and an objective feeling of cold of the abdomen on palpation.

a) Yang deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen

Feeling of cold of the epigastrium and abdomen, dull epigastric pain, poor appetite, loose stools, tiredness, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Feeling of cold in the lower abdomen, back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white

complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Directing and Penetrating Vessels Deficient and Cold

Feeling of cold in the lower abdomen (central in the case of the Directing Vessel and lateral in the case of the Penetrating Vessel), irregular periods, painful periods, infertility, excessive white vaginal discharge, dark rings under the eyes, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

d) Stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel

Feeling of cold in the central-lower abdomen extending to the scrotum, contraction of the scrotum or vagina, cold hands and feet, white tongue coating, Deep-Wiry pulse.

8. FEELING OF PULSATION UNDER THE UMBILICUS

a) Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel

Feeling of pulsation under the umbilicus, abdominal distension, epigastric fullness and discomfort, feeling of tightness of the chest, palpitations, anxiety, feeling of a lump in the throat, feeling of heat in the face, Firm pulse.

b) Kidneys not receiving Qi

Feeling of pulsation under the umbilicus, breathlessness, wheezing, sighing, sweating, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

c) Phlegm-Fluids in the abdomen

Feeling of pulsation under the umbilicus, abdominal fullness and distension, vomiting of watery fluids, feeling of oppression of the chest, loose stools, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Wiry pulse.

9. FEELING OF ENERGY RISING IN THE ABDOMEN

Western patients will seldom report this symptom as such, but it does occur frequently, and it must be elicited on interrogation. In Chinese medicine this symptom occurs in the so-called 'Running Piglet' pattern; the

patient feels a sensation of energy rising all the way from the lower abdomen to the throat as if there were a 'running piglet' in the abdomen. The most common pathology causing this symptom is Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel.

a) Rebellious Qi in the Penetrating Vessel

Feeling of energy rising in the abdomen, abdominal distension or fullness, epigastric fullness and discomfort, 'butterflies in the stomach', feeling of tightness of the chest, palpitations, anxiety, feeling of a lump in the throat, feeling of heat in the face, Firm pulse.

b) Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat rebelling upwards

Feeling of energy rushing up from the abdomen to the throat and face from the lower abdomen, feeling of heat in the face, anxiety, easily startled, feeling as if one is going to die, palpitations, abdominal pain, bitter taste, vomiting, mental restlessness, feeling hot and cold, tongue with red sides and yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Yin-Cold in the abdomen

Feeling of energy rising in the abdomen, abdominal fullness, distension and pain, vomiting of watery fluids, feeling of oppression of the chest, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, lower backache, Pale and Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Deep-Tight pulse.

10. BORBORYGMI

'Borborygmi' indicates a gurgling sound in the intestines.

a) Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Borborygmi that come and go according to emotional moods and are not relieved after diarrhoea, abdominal distension, alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, irritability, sighing, pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

b) Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Borborygmi, loose stools with foul smell and mucus, burning sensation in the anus, thirst with no desire to

drink, sticky taste, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Damp-Phlegm in the Intestines

Borborygmi, loose stools, feeling of abdominal fullness, feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, vomiting, mucus in the stools, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Slight borborygmi, loose stools, back ache, dizziness, cold limbs, tiredness, abundant-pale urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

e) Stomach and Spleen Deficient and Cold

Slight borborygmi, abdomen and epigastrium feel cold, loose stools, cold limbs, tiredness, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

11. FLATULENCE

a) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Flatulence, slight abdominal distension, loose stools, poor appetite, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Flatulence, hypochondrial and abdominal distension, alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, irritability, tiredness, poor appetite, Pale tongue, pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

c) Liver-Qi stagnation

Flatulence, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

12. CENTRAL-LOWER ABDOMINAL PAIN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

This is pain in the central-lower abdominal area between the umbilicus and the symphysis pubis;

in Chinese it is called *xiao fu*, which means 'small abdomen'.

This area is influenced by the channels of the Kidneys, Bladder, Small Intestine, and Directing Vessel. The symptoms and signs discussed here are only the non-gynaecological ones. Pain in the central-lower abdominal area may, of course, also be due to various pathologies affecting the Uterus and the Directing Vessel. These are discussed in the section on gynaecological symptoms and signs ([Chapters 84 to 89](#)).

a) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Central-lower abdominal pain and fullness, frequency and difficulty in urination, burning on urination, dark urine, thirst with no desire to drink, sticky-yellow tongue coating on the root, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Stagnation of Qi in the Bladder

Central-lower abdominal pain and distension, pronounced feeling of distension in the area immediately over the symphysis pubis, frequent but scanty urination, Wiry pulse.

c) Intestines Deficient and Cold

Dull central-lower abdominal pain that comes and goes and is alleviated by warm liquids and the application of heat and aggravated by cold liquids, abdomen feels cold to the touch, cold limbs, loose stools, pale urine, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Stasis of Blood in the Bladder

Stabbing central-lower abdominal pain, blood in the urine, pain on urination, Purple tongue, Deep-Wiry pulse.

e) Liver-Qi stagnation

Pain and distension of the central-lower abdominal area, urinary difficulty, pronounced feeling of distension before urination, Wiry pulse.

f) Liver-Blood stasis

Severe pain of the central-lower abdominal area, urinary difficulty, blood in the urine, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

g) Liver-Fire

Pain of the central-lower abdominal area, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

h) Retention of Food and Cold

Pain of the central-lower abdominal area, pronounced feeling of distension that is worse after eating and with cold, feeling of fullness, abdomen cold to the touch, Deep-Slippery pulse, tongue with thick-sticky coating.

i) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Pain of the central-lower abdominal area, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

j) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Pain of the central-lower abdominal area, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to sip water, back ache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

k) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pain of the central-lower abdominal area, back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

13. LATERAL-LOWER ABDOMINAL PAIN

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 38](#)

This is pain in the two lateral areas of the lower abdomen; in Chinese these areas are called *shao fu*, which means 'lesser abdomen'. This area is under the influence of the channels of the Liver, Large Intestine, and Penetrating Vessel. As a rule of thumb, when a problem occurs in the right lateral-lower abdominal area, it is likely to be caused by the gynaecological system; when it occurs in

the left later-lower abdominal area, it is more likely to be the result of a Large Intestine pathology, but this is only a broad rule subject to exceptions.

a) Liver-Qi stagnation

Lateral-lower abdominal pain and distension, pain coming and going according to emotional moods, irritability, moodiness, constipation with small stools, Wiry pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine

Lateral-lower abdominal pain, loose stools with mucus and blood, feeling of heaviness, thirst with no desire to drink, burning in the anus, tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Cold-Dampness in the Large Intestine

Lateral-lower abdominal pain, loose stools with mucus, feeling of heaviness, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

d) Liver-Blood stasis

Stabbing lateral-lower abdominal pain, feeling of abdominal mass, hypochondrial pain, painful periods, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

e) Large Intestine Deficient and Cold

Dull lateral-lower abdominal pain that comes and goes and is better with rest, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, pale complexion, tiredness, abdomen feels cold to the touch, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

f) Girdle Vessel pain

Lateral-lower abdominal pain radiating to the back, or back ache radiating to the lateral-lower abdominal area, Wiry pulse.

g) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood in the Penetrating Vessel

Lateral-lower abdominal pain, feeling of fullness in the abdomen and umbilical region, feeling of tightness of

the chest, palpitations, anxiety, painful periods, feeling of a lump in the throat, feeling of heat in the face, Purple tongue, Firm pulse.

h) Stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel

Lateral-lower abdominal pain radiating to the testis or vagina, contraction of the scrotum or vagina, pain alleviated by application of heat, pale complexion, cold hands and feet, white tongue coating, Deep-Wiry-Slow pulse.

14. DISTENDED ABDOMINAL VEINS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Stasis of Blood in the Liver and Spleen

Blue veins on abdomen, abdominal pain, hypochondrial pain, blood in stools, dark complexion, spider nevi on throat and chest, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Qi stagnation with Dampness

Blue veins on abdomen, abdominal distension and fullness, feeling of heaviness, sticky tongue coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

c) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pale-blue veins on abdomen, abdominal distension, oedema, cold limbs, frequent-pale urination, tiredness, weak knees, loose stools, darkish complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Blue veins on abdomen, dizziness, tinnitus, dry eyes, back ache, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

e) Blood-Heat

Red veins on abdomen, abdomen hot to the touch, feeling of heat, skin diseases with red eruptions, dry mouth, bleeding, Red tongue, Rapid pulse.

f) Stagnation of Cold

Dark blue veins on abdomen; abdominal pain and distension, worse with cold liquids, better with warmth; tongue with white coating, Deep-Slow pulse.

15. ABDOMINAL MASSES

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

Abdominal masses are called *Ji Ju*. *Ji* indicates actual abdominal masses that are fixed and immovable; if there is an associated pain, its location is fixed. These masses are due to stasis of Blood, and I call them 'Blood masses'. *Ju* indicates abdominal masses that come and go, do not have a fixed location, and are movable. If there is an associated pain, it, too, comes and goes and changes location. Such masses are due to stagnation of Qi, and I call them 'Qi masses'.

Actual abdominal lumps, therefore, pertain to the category of abdominal masses, specifically *Ji* masses (i.e. Blood masses).

Another name for abdominal masses was *Zheng Jia*, *Zheng* being equivalent to *Ji* (i.e. acute, fixed masses), and *Jia* being equivalent to *Ju* (i.e. non-substantial masses from stagnation of Qi). The two terms *Zheng Jia* normally referred to abdominal masses occurring only in women; but although these masses are more frequent in women, they do occur in men as well.

a) Liver-Qi stagnation

Movable abdominal masses that come and go, abdominal distension and pain that come and go with the masses, irritability, depression, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

b) Liver-Blood stasis

Hard and immovable abdominal masses, abdominal distension and pain, irritability, painful periods, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Phlegm and retention of food

Masses in the epigastrium or umbilical area, feeling of fullness, oppression and pain of the epigastrium, Swollen tongue with thick coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Soft masses in the epigastrium or umbilical area, slight abdominal distension, poor appetite, tiredness, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

e) Kidney-Yang deficiency with Liver-Blood stasis

Abdominal masses, back ache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

f) Damp-Phlegm

Abdominal masses that are relatively soft on palpation, feeling of heaviness, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with thick-sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

g) Damp-Heat

Abdominal masses, pain, tenderness on palpation, thirst, feeling of heat, feeling of heaviness, tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

16. SMALL HYPOCHONDRIAL LUMPS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Liver-Blood stasis

Small, hypochondrial lumps, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

17. OEDEMA OF THE ABDOMEN

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Spleen-Yang deficiency

Oedema of the abdomen, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Oedema of the abdomen and ankles, lower back ache, cold knees, sensation of cold in the lower back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, apathy, loose stools, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

18. THIN ABDOMEN

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Qi and Blood deficiency

Thin abdomen, loose stools, tiredness, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Yin deficiency

Thin abdomen, poor appetite, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to sip water, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

19. LARGE ABDOMEN

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Phlegm obstructing the Spleen

Large abdomen, abdominal distension, oppression of the chest, dizziness, poor appetite, Swollen and Pale tongue, Slippery pulse.

20. SAGGING LOWER ABDOMEN

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Damp-Phlegm in the Lower Burner

Sagging lower abdomen, abdomen swollen and soft, abdominal distension, feeling of heaviness, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

b) Severe Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Sagging lower abdomen, tiredness, lethargy, feeling cold, frequent-clear urination, lower back ache, Pale and Wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

21. LUMPS IN THE EPIGASTRIUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Damp-Phlegm in the Middle Burner

Lumps in the epigastrium that are soft, epigastric distension, feeling of heaviness, poor appetite, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

b) Blood stasis

Lumps in the epigastrium that are hard and immovable, epigastric pain, vomiting blood, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

c) Phlegm and Blood stasis in the Middle Burner

Lumps in the epigastrium that are hard and immovable, epigastric distension and pain, vomiting blood, dark complexion, Purple and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

22. PROTRUDING UMBILICUS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Empty-Cold with Qi stagnation

Protruding umbilicus, worse with cold liquids, better with warmth, worse with emotional upsets; Pale tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow and slightly Wiry pulse.

b) Blood stasis with oedema

Protruding umbilicus, pain around umbilicus, swollen abdomen, blood in the stools, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

c) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Protruding umbilicus, worse with cold; loose stools, tiredness, Pale and Wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

23. SUNKEN UMBILICUS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Blood stasis with Spleen-Qi sinking

Sunken umbilicus, pain around umbilicus, feeling of bearing down, tiredness, blood in the stools, Pale-Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the abdomen

Sunken umbilicus, umbilical area tender on palpation, abdominal distension, swollen abdomen, tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

24. LINES ON THE ABDOMEN

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Blood stasis deriving from Cold

Blue lines on abdomen, abdominal pain, blood in the stools, worse with cold liquids, better for warmth; Pale-Purple tongue, Wiry-Slow pulse.

b) Blood stasis with Blood Heat

Purple lines on abdomen; abdominal pain, aggravated by exposure to heat; blood in the stools, Reddish-purple tongue, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

25. MACULAE ON THE ABDOMEN

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

a) Blood Heat

Red maculae on abdomen, aggravated by exposure to heat; blood in the stools, skin eruptions, Red tongue, Rapid pulse.

b) Blood stasis

Purple maculae on abdomen, abdominal pain, abdomen hard on palpation, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

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Heat in the Intestines

The following symptoms are discussed:

1. Diarrhoea or loose stools
2. Diarrhoea with vomiting
3. Constipation
4. Alternation of constipation and loose stools
5. Incontinence of faeces
6. Blood and mucus in the stools
7. Mucus in the stools
8. Blood in the stools
9. Difficulty in defecation
10. Straining in defecation

1. DIARRHOEA OR LOOSE STOOLS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Empty

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Loose stools, slight abdominal distension, poor appetite, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, ST-37 Shangjuxu, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-25 Tianshu.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Early-morning diarrhoea, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Du-4 Mingmen, ST-37 Shangjuxu, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-25 Tianshu. Moxa.

b) Full

Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Loose stools or alternation of loose stools and constipation, stools sometimes dry and bitty and sometimes loose, flatulence, irritability, abdominal distension and pain, tiredness, poor appetite, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-15 Daheng, BL-20 Pishu.

Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Loose stools with foul smell and mucus and possibly blood, offensive odour of stools, burning in the anus, abdominal pain that is not relieved by a bowel movement, scanty-dark urine, fever, sweating that does not decrease the fever, feeling of heat, thirst without a desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-25 Tianshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-39 Xiajuxu, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Cold-Dampness in the Intestines

Loose stools with mucus and without smell, abdominal pain, abdominal fullness, undigested food in the stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, feeling of heaviness, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-25 Tianshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-39 Xiajuxu, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu. Moxa.

c) Other patterns

Spleen-Qi deficient and sinking

Chronic loose stools or normal but very frequent stools, urgency, dragging down feeling, tiredness, depression, poor appetite, weak limbs, Pale tongue with teeth marks, Weak pulse.

Retention of food

Loose stools; fullness, pain, and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting; nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, insomnia, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippery pulse.

2. DIARRHOEA WITH VOMITING

a) Food poisoning

Violent diarrhoea and vomiting with sudden onset, nausea at the smell of food, epigastric fullness, sour regurgitation, thick tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

b) Cold-Dampness in the Stomach and Intestines

Diarrhoea without smell but with vomiting, mucus in the stools, abdominal pain that is alleviated by application of heat, epigastric and abdominal fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

c) Stomach and Intestines Deficient and Cold

Diarrhoea and vomiting of watery fluids, dull abdominal pain, discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium, better after eating and better with pressure or massage, no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods, vomiting of clear fluid, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness,

pale complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

d) Retention of food

Diarrhoea with vomiting, fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, insomnia, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thick tongue coating, Full-Slippery pulse.

e) Invasion of Summer Heat

Sudden diarrhoea and vomiting, epigastric pain, sour regurgitation, aversion to cold, fever, thirst, irritability, feeling of oppression of the chest, headache, cold hands and feet, dark urine, Floating-Rapid pulse.

3. CONSTIPATION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

The term 'constipation' is used to describe the slow movement of unduly firm contents through the large bowel, leading to infrequent passing of small, hard stools. Thus, constipation may indicate several different symptoms, among which are:

- Bowel movements that do not occur daily
- Dry stools
- Difficult defecation
- Abnormal shape of stools

Views on what constitutes a normal frequency of bowel movement vary widely; from the point of view of Chinese medicine, the bowel movement should occur at least once a day. This view runs counter to the Western medicine view, according to which, the frequency of bowel movements is not that important as long as they occur regularly.

a) Full

Heat in the Intestines

Constipation with dry stools, burning sensation in the mouth, dry tongue, burning and swelling in anus, scanty-dark urine, thick-yellow (or brown or black) dry tongue coating, Full-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-25 Tianshu, SP-15 Daheng, BL-25 Dachangshu.

Liver-Fire

Constipation with dry stools, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-25 Tianshu, SP-15 Daheng, BL-25 Dachangshu.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Constipation with small stools, or alternation of constipation with diarrhoea, difficulty in defecation, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, SP-15 Daheng, Ren-6 Qihai.

b) Empty

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Chronic constipation, exhaustion after bowel movement, stools not dry, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Du-4 Mingmen, SP-15 Daheng, Ren-6 Qihai.

Blood deficiency

Dry stools, difficulty in defecation, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-15 Daheng.

Yin deficiency of the Stomach and Intestines

Constipation, dry stools, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, abdominal pain, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, SP-15 Daheng.

c) Other patterns

Heat in Bright Yang (Organ Syndrome)

Constipation with dry stools, abdominal pain and fullness, fever, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse. This corresponds either to the Organ pattern of Heat in Bright Yang within the Identification of Patterns according to the Six Stages or to the pattern of Dry Heat in the Intestines within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels.

Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency

Dry stools, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency

Constipation with difficulty in opening the bowels, with a feeling of exhaustion afterwards; thin and long stools that are not dry, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike to speak, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Cold in the intestines

Constipation, stools not dry, no bowel movement for several days, spastic abdominal pain, cold sensation in the abdomen, thick-white tongue coating, Deep-Wiry pulse.

Dampness in the Intestines

Constipation, feeling of fullness and heaviness of the abdomen, abdominal pain, sticky taste, thick-sticky tongue coating on the root, pulse Slippery on both Rear positions.

Retention of food in the Intestines

Constipation, abdominal pain alleviated by evacuation, feeling of fullness of the abdomen, thick-sticky tongue coating on the root, pulse that is Slippery on both rear positions.



CLINICAL NOTE

When a patient complains about 'constipation', always establish clearly what he or she is referring to; that is, frequency of stool, consistency of it or difficulty in passing a stool.

4. ALTERNATION OF CONSTIPATION AND LOOSE STOOLS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

Alternation of constipation and loose stools means that the patient goes through periods of constipation (by which is meant that the stools are infrequent or rather difficult and bitty) followed by a period of loose stools. These periods may last days or weeks.

a) Full

Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Alternation of periods of constipation and loose stools, small and bitty stools, straining on defecation during the periods of constipation, abdominal distension, abdominal pain that is not relieved by the bowel movement, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, tongue that may have Red sides (if Liver-Qi

stagnation predominates) or Pales sides (if Spleen-Qi deficiency predominates), pulse that is Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-15 Daheng, ST-25 Tianshu, BL-20 Pishu.

Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen, Dampness

Alternation of periods of constipation and loose stools, small and bitty stools, mucus in the stools, straining on defecation during the periods of constipation, abdominal distension and fullness, abdominal pain that may be relieved by the bowel movement (if Dampness predominates), hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, feeling of a heaviness of the abdomen, tongue that may have Red sides (if Liver-Qi stagnation predominates) or Pale sides (if Spleen-Qi deficiency predominates) with a sticky coating, pulse that is Wiry on the left and Soggy on the right.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-15 Daheng, ST-25 Tianshu, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Full/Empty

Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen, Dampness, Spleen-Qi deficiency

Alternation of periods of constipation and loose stools, small and bitty stools, mucus in the stools, straining on defecation during the periods of constipation, abdominal distension and fullness, abdominal pain that may be relieved by the bowel movement (if Dampness predominates) or aggravated by it (if Spleen deficiency predominates), hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, feeling of heaviness of the abdomen, tongue that may have Red sides (if Liver-Qi stagnation predominates) or Pale sides (if Spleen-Qi deficiency predominates) with a sticky coating, pulse that is Wiry on the left and Soggy on the right.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-15 Daheng, ST-25 Tianshu, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

c) Other patterns

Severe Spleen-Qi deficiency

Alternation of constipation and loose stools, no abdominal pain or fullness, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

I find nearly always that the so-called 'irritable bowel syndrome' characterized by alternation of constipation and loose stools are due to three pathogenic conditions in varying proportions:

- Liver-Qi stagnation
- Spleen-Qi deficiency
- Dampness

5. INCONTINENCE OF FAECES

a) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Incontinence of faeces, early-morning diarrhoea, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, a desire to lie down, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency

Incontinence of faeces, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, propensity to catching colds, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This pattern usually occurs only in the elderly.

6. BLOOD AND MUCUS IN THE STOOLS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Diarrhoea with blood and mucus, burning sensation of the anus, feeling of heaviness, abdominal pain, feeling of heat, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Deficiency of Yin of the Stomach and Intestines with Empty Heat

Blood and mucus in the stools, dull abdominal pain, dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, feeling of hunger but no desire to eat, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, bleeding gums, Red tongue (or Red centre only) without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Cold-Dampness in the Intestines

Diarrhoea with a lot of mucus and a little blood, abdominal pain and fullness, nausea, vomiting, feeling of heaviness, cold limbs, Pale tongue with sticky-white coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

d) Large Intestine Deficient and Cold

Diarrhoea with little mucus and blood, dull abdominal pain that is relieved by the application of heat, feeling cold, cold limbs, tiredness, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

e) Toxic Heat in the Intestines

Diarrhoea with mucus and blood, foul-smelling stools, burning sensation of the anus, fever, feeling of heat, abdominal pain, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Blood and mucus in the stools may indicate ulcerative colitis, and the patient should always be referred for a colonoscopy.

7. MUCUS IN THE STOOLS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Dampness in the Intestines

Mucus in the stools, loose stools, abdominal fullness and/or pain, feeling of heaviness of the abdomen, sticky taste, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Mucus in the stools, loose stools with foul smell, burning sensation of the anus, abdominal fullness and pain, feeling of heaviness of the abdomen, sticky taste, thirst without desire to drink, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

8. BLOOD IN THE STOOLS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

Chinese medicine differentiates this symptom according to the colour of the blood to identify the pattern without consideration of the site of bleeding. In this instance, however, it is important to ask the patient to obtain a Western diagnosis as well. In fact, blood in the stools can be caused by bleeding haemorrhoids or anal fissures, or by bleeding within the large intestine; obviously these two symptoms are very different in pathology and severity.

a) Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Fresh blood in the stools, loose stools, smelly stools, abdominal pain, burning sensation in the anus, a feeling of heaviness, abdominal fullness, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating and red spots on the root, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Profuse fresh blood in the stools, no smell, loose stools, slight abdominal pain, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

c) Heat in the Intestines

Dark blood in the stools, abdominal pain, constipation, feeling of heat, thirst, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

d) Toxic Heat in the Intestines

Diarrhoea with mucus and blood, foul-smelling stools, burning sensation of the anus, fever, feeling of heat, abdominal pain, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

e) Blood stasis in the Intestines

Dark blood in the stools, abdominal pain, dark complexion, anxiety, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

f) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Fresh blood in the stools, constipation, dizziness, tinnitus, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, malar flush, dry eyes, blurred vision, lower backache, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, scanty menstruation, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

9. DIFFICULTY IN DEFECACTION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

‘Difficulty in defecation’ is a translation of the complex Chinese symptom called *li ji hou zhong*. This symptom is composed of two parts: *li ji* means that the patient has abdominal pain and the urge to defecate but is unable to; *hou zhong* means that the patient does defecate eventually but the abdominal discomfort is not relieved by it and there is a feeling of heaviness after defecation.

a) Stagnation of Qi in the Intestines

Difficulty in defecation, abdominal distension, abdominal pain before defecation that is not relieved after defecation, small, bitty stools, Wiry pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Difficulty in defecation, abdominal pain relieved by defecation, burning sensation in the anus, mucus in the stools, foul-smelling stools, feeling of heaviness, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Difficulty in defecation or loose stools, tiredness after defecation, slight abdominal distension, poor appetite, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

d) Intestines Dryness and Liver-Blood deficiency

Difficulty in defecation, dry stools, dull abdominal pain, dry skin, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

10. STRAINING IN DEFECACTION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

‘Straining in defecation’ means that the patient does have a bowel movement every day, but the movement takes a long time and involves straining. ‘Straining in defecation’ differs from ‘Constipation’ in three respects:

- With ‘Straining in defecation’, unlike ‘Constipation’, there is a bowel movement every day.
- With ‘Straining in defecation’, unlike ‘Constipation’ the stools are not dry.
- With ‘Straining in defecation’, unlike ‘Constipation’, there are no other obvious abdominal symptoms, such as pain, fullness, or distension.

a) Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Straining in defecation, small stools, alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, stools sometimes dry and bitty and sometimes loose, abdominal distension, flatulence, tiredness, poor appetite, normal-coloured tongue (or slightly Red on the sides in severe cases of Liver-Qi stagnation), pulse Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

b) Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency

Straining in defecation with a feeling of exhaustion afterwards, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, propensity to catching colds, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This pattern usually occurs in the elderly.

c) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Straining in defecation, occasionally loose stools, exhaustion after defecation, slight abdominal distension, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, poor appetite, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. This pattern usually occurs in the elderly.

d) Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency

Straining in defecation, dry stools, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

e) Damp-Heat in the Intestines

Straining in defecation, mucus in the stools, foul-smelling stools, burning sensation in the anus, abdominal pain and fullness, a feeling of heaviness, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

f) Heat in the Intestines

Straining in defecation, small stools, feeling of heat, red face, thirst, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

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Urination

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Damp-Heat in the Bladder
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The following urinary symptoms are discussed:

1. Dark urine
2. Pale and abundant urine
3. Turbid urine
4. Painful urination
5. Scanty and difficult urination
6. Difficult urination
7. Frequent urination
8. Dribbling of urine
9. Incontinence of urine
10. Nocturnal enuresis
11. Urination at night
12. Blood in the urine
13. Sperm in the urine

1. DARK URINE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Dark urine, frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, difficult urination, dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow tongue coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Dark and scanty urine, slight burning on urination, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower back ache, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Heat in the Heart and Small Intestine

Dark urine that may contain blood, burning on urination, feeling of heat, anxiety, red face, insomnia, palpitations, tongue ulcers, excessive dreaming, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Rapid-Overflowing pulse.

d) Damp-Heat in the Liver

Dark and scanty urine, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium, bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

e) Heat in the Intestines

Dark and scanty urine, thirst, abdominal pain, constipation, abdominal fullness, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

f) Cold-Dampness in the Intestines

Dark and turbid urine coloured like tea, *not* scanty, difficulty in urination, mucus in the stools, abdominal fullness and pain, pale complexion, feeling of heaviness, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating on the root,

Slippery-Slow pulse. In this pattern, it is the Dampness, rather than the Cold, that makes the urine darkish and turbid.



CLINICAL NOTE

In women it is often difficult to establish the colour of the urine, as they often do not look after micturition to take notice of the colour.

2. PALE AND ABUNDANT URINE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pale and abundant urine, urination at night, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Cold in the Bladder

Pale and abundant urine, feeling cold, cold limbs, lower back ache, central-lower abdominal pain that is alleviated by the application of heat, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

3. TURBID URINE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Dampness in the Bladder

Turbid urine like rice soup, difficult urination, pain on urination, feeling of heaviness, sticky tongue coating on the root, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether the Dampness is associated with Cold or Heat.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Turbid and dilute urine like a sauce, scanty urine, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Turbid and abundant urine, dribbling after urination, urination at night, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Turbid urine, dribbling after urination, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

4. PAINFUL URINATION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

‘Painful urination’ comes under the Chinese medicine heading of *Lin* disease which, by definition, is characterised by painful urination. There are six types of *Lin* diseases: Heat, Stone, Qi, Blood, Sticky, and Fatigue *Lin*, all of which present with painful and difficult urination.

a) Full

Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Pain during urination, difficult urination, burning on urination, dark urine, turbid urine, frequent and urgent urination, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-63 Jinmen, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-28 Pangguanshu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Liver-Fire

Burning pain during urination, dark urine, hypogastric distension, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, BL-63 Jinmen, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-28 Pangguanshu.

b) Empty/Full

Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight pain during urination, scanty and dark urine, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower back ache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-63 Jinmen, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-28 Pangguanshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Directing Vessel (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai), KI-3 Taixi.

c) Other patterns

Heart-Fire

Pain during urination, burning on urination, dark urine, occasionally blood in the urine, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Pain before urination, hypogastric distension, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Stasis of Blood in the Bladder

Pain before urination, blood in the urine, stabbing hypogastric pain, lower abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

5. SCANTY AND DIFFICULT URINATION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Scanty, difficult, and painful urination, dark urine, turbid urine, frequent and urgent urination, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of

heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver-Qi stagnation

Scanty and difficult urination, no pain during urination, pain and distension of the hypogastrum before urination, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, a feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Scanty and difficult urination, dark urine, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Scanty and difficult urination, pale urine, no pain on urination, urination at night, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. Normally, Kidney-Yang deficiency causes the urination to be abundant; in rare cases, Kidney-Yang may be so deficient that it fails to move fluids at all and therefore the urine becomes scanty.

e) Spleen-Yang deficiency with Dampness

Scanty and difficult urination, no pain on urination, pale urine, slightly turbid urine, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, abdominal fullness, sticky taste, tiredness, excessive vaginal discharge, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

f) Deficient Lung-Qi not descending

Scanty and difficult urination, no pain, oedema of the face, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

6. DIFFICULT URINATION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Full

Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Difficult and painful urination, dark and turbid urine, frequent and urgent urination, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-63 Jinmen, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-28 Pangguanshu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Difficult urination, no pain on urination, pain and distension of the hypogastrum before urination, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, BL-63 Jinmen, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-28 Pangguanshu.

b) Empty

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Difficult urination, pale urine, no pain on urination, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Du-4 Mingmen, BL-63 Jinmen, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-28 Pangguanshu. Moxa.

c) Other patterns

Lung-Qi deficiency

Difficult urination, no pain, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating,

dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This condition generally occurs only in the elderly.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Difficult urination, no pain on urination, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Stasis of Blood in the Lower Burner

Difficult urination, pain before micturition, urination stops and starts, hypogastric pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

7. FREQUENT URINATION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

‘Frequent urination’ indicates excessive frequency of micturition. This varies between men and women as women have a larger bladder and need to urinate less frequently than men; thus ‘frequent urination’ could be defined as urinating more than 3 times a day for women and more than about 5 to 6 times for men. Urinating at night is never normal; it is a type of frequent urination that will be discussed separately below.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Frequent, abundant, and pale urination, urination at night, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen, BL-63 Jinmen, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-28 Pangguanshu. Moxa.

a) Full

Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Frequent, scanty, and dark urination, burning on urination, difficulty in urination, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat,

thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-63 Jinmen, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-28 Pangguanshu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Other patterns

Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Frequent urination, feeling of bearing down, slight incontinence of urine, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike to speak, propensity to catching colds, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Frequent, scanty, and dark urine, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

We should not ask patients whether urination is frequent; rather, we should ask specifically how many times the person urinates in a day. This information is often of no clinical value if the patient is forcing himself or herself to drink large amounts of water.

8. DRIBBLING OF URINE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

a) Kidney-Qi not firm

Dribbling of urine that is worse after sex, clear-frequent urination, weak-stream urination, abundant urination, incontinence of urine, urination at night, soreness and weakness of the lower back, weak knees, premature ejaculation, in women prolapse of the uterus, chronic white vaginal discharge, tiredness, dragging-down feeling in the lower abdomen, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Dribbling of urine, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Dribbling of urine, difficult urination, burning on urination, dark urine, turbid urine, frequent and urgent urination, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

9. INCONTINENCE OF URINE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

‘Incontinence of urine’ should be differentiated from ‘enuresis’ (see below). The former indicates involuntary urination with the person conscious of it happening; enuresis, usually occurring at night, indicates involuntary urination of which the person is not conscious.

a) Kidney-Qi not firm

Incontinence of urine that is worse after sex, clear-frequent urination, weak-stream urination, abundant urination, incontinence of urine, urination at night, soreness and weakness of the lower back, weak knees, premature ejaculation, in women prolapse of the uterus, chronic white vaginal discharge, tiredness, dragging-down feeling in the lower abdomen, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Incontinence of urine, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, propensity to catching colds, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This usually occurs in the elderly.

c) Heat in the Bladder

Incontinence of urine, scanty-dark urination, burning on urination, thirst, dry-yellow tongue coating, pulse Wiry on the Left-Rear position and Rapid.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Incontinence of urine, scanty urination, dark urine, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower back ache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

10. NOCTURNAL ENURESIS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

Nocturnal enuresis should be differentiated from incontinence of urine. The former occurs at night, and the person is obviously unaware of it; the latter occurs at any time, and the person is aware it is happening. Nocturnal enuresis should also be differentiated from urination at night (or nocturia). The former occurs when the person is asleep and is obviously not conscious of it; the latter occurs when the patient wakes and gets up at night to urinate. Nocturnal enuresis is much more frequent in children.

a) Empty

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Nocturnal enuresis, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. In children this is usually a constitutional Kidney-Yang deficiency, and due to their age, there will not be many Kidney-deficiency symptoms. Indeed, if a child suffers from nocturnal enuresis and the tongue is Pale and the Kidney pulse is Weak, these signs are enough to diagnose a constitutional Kidney-Yang deficiency. This child will usually be a quiet, shy child without much energy.

Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, BL-28 Pangguangshu, Ren-3 Zhongji, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

b) Full**Liver-Fire**

Nocturnal enuresis, dark urine, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse. This is fairly common in children; this child will be tense and highly strung, in contrast to the previous condition of constitutional Kidney-Yang deficiency. As in the former pattern, a child may have very few symptoms of Liver-Fire, such as red sides of the tongue, irritability, and thirst.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-3 Zhongji, HE-7 Shenmen.

c) Other patterns**Spleen-Qi deficient and sinking**

Nocturnal enuresis, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, slight abdominal distension, bearing-down feeling, prolapse of the uterus, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Lung-Qi deficiency

Nocturnal enuresis, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Nocturnal enuresis, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

11. URINATION AT NIGHT

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

‘Urination at night’ should be differentiated from ‘nocturnal enuresis’; the difference was explained above

under ‘Nocturnal enuresis’. In Chinese medicine, any degree of urination at night is considered abnormal; that is, a person should not get up to urinate at night at all. Therefore, even if the patient gets up only once, this would still be considered as ‘urination at night’. Obviously the more times the patient gets up to urinate, the more serious the condition. In Western medicine, frequent urination at night may indicate prostate hypertrophy.

a) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Urination at night, pale-abundant urination, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Urination at night, abundant-clear urination, lower back ache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

In middle-aged or elderly men, frequent urination at night is often due to benign prostatic hyperplasia. In such cases, the pathogenic factors are Dampness, Phlegm, and Blood stasis.

12. BLOOD IN THE URINE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 31](#)

‘Blood in the urine’ should be differentiated from ‘Blood Painful-Urination Syndrome’ (*Lin* disease); the former simply indicates the presence of blood in the urine without pain, whereas the latter indicates painful urination with blood in the urine.

a) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Blood in the urine, difficult urination, turbid urine, frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, thirst with no desire

to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Liver

Blood in the urine, dark urine, urinary difficulty, burning on urination; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or hypogastrium; bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Heart-Fire

Blood in the urine, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Blood in the urine, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

e) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pale blood in the urine, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, lower back ache, cold and weak knees,

feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

13. SPERM IN THE URINE

a) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Sperm in urine, burning on urination, difficult urination, frequent and urgent urination, dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Sperm in urine, dark-scanty urine, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, lower back ache, poor memory, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Kidney-Qi not firm

Sperm in urine, dribbling of urine that is worse after sex, clear-frequent urination, weak-stream urination, abundant urination, incontinence of urine, urination at night, soreness and weakness of the lower back, weak knees, premature ejaculation, in women prolapse of the uterus, chronic white vaginal discharge, tiredness, a dragging-down feeling in the lower abdomen, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

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The following symptoms are discussed:

1. Itching of the anus
2. Haemorrhoids
3. Anal prolapse
4. Anal fissure
5. Anal fistula
6. Anal ulcers

1. ITCHING OF THE ANUS

a) Damp-Heat in the Bladder channel

Intense itching of the anus, haemorrhoids, frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, difficult

urination, dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Cold-Dampness in the Bladder channel

Itching of the anus, haemorrhoids, frequent and urgent urination, difficult urination, feeling of heaviness in the hypogastrium and urethra, pale and turbid urine, white-sticky tongue coating on root, Slippery-Slow pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Governing Vessel

Itchy anus, haemorrhoids, stiffness and pain of the spine, lower back ache, headache, painful urination, sticky-yellow tongue coating on the root, Pulse Floating and Long on all three positions of the left side.

d) Blood deficiency generating Empty Wind

Slight itching of the anus, dryness of the anus, anal fissures, no pain or burning, dry skin, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, numbness and/or tingling of limbs, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

2. HAEMORRHOIDS

a) Full

Damp-Heat in the Bladder channel

Bleeding haemorrhoids, pain, redness and swelling of the anus, fresh red blood, frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, difficult urination, dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, thirst with no desire to drink,

hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-63 Jinmen, BL-58 Feiyang, BL-57 Chengshan, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Du-1 Changqiang, Du-20 Baihui.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood in the Bladder channel

Bleeding haemorrhoids, dark blood, pain and swelling, difficulty in defecation, hypogastric distension and pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-63 Jinmen, BL-58 Feiyang, BL-57 Chengshan, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Du-1 Changqiang, SP-10 Xuehai.

b) Other patterns

Spleen-Qi deficient and sinking

Haemorrhoids, may be bleeding with fresh red blood; no pain, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, depression, bearing-down feeling, prolapse of the uterus, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Liver-Fire

Bleeding haemorrhoids, fresh or dark red blood, burning, pain and swelling, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

3. ANAL PROLAPSE

a) Spleen-Qi deficient and sinking

Anal prolapse that may come and go, no redness, no pain, no swelling, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, depression, bearing-down feeling, prolapse of the uterus, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Anal prolapse, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness,

lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Bladder channel

Anal prolapse, swelling, redness and pain of the anus, frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, difficult urination, dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

4. ANAL FISSURE

a) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Anal fissure, redness, swelling and itching of the anus, fresh red blood in the stools, frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, difficult urination, dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Blood deficiency and Intestines Dryness

Anal fissure, dryness of the anus, dry stools, pain in the anus, difficulty in defecation, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale and dry tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Fire in the Intestines

Anal fissure, constipation, dry stools, redness and burning of the anus, burning abdominal pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry mouth, feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

5. ANAL FISTULA

a) Full Heat

Anal fistula, swelling and burning of the anus, oozing of a yellow fluid, constipation, mental restlessness, feeling

of heat, thirst, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Empty Heat

Anal fistula, burning of the anus, oozing of a thin fluid, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm-heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Empty Cold

Anal fistula; no burning, pain, or swelling; feeling cold, oozing of a thin fluid, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

6. ANAL ULCERS

a) Deficiency of Lungs, Spleen, and Kidneys

Anal ulcers that are not painful or raised, pale red in colour, no burning, oozing a thin fluid; loose stools, slight

shortness of breath, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, tiredness, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, weakness of the limbs, lower back ache, cold knees, feeling cold, weak knees, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Toxic Heat

Anal ulcers; swelling, pain, redness of the anus; thirst, feeling of heat, Red tongue with red points and sticky-yellow coating on the root, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

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21. Pain and itching of the penis
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23. Swelling and pain of the testicles
24. Redness and swelling of the glans penis
25. Peyronie's disease
26. Penis ulcers
27. Loss of pubic hair
28. Excessive pubic hair

1. IMPOTENCE

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 45

'Impotence' should be differentiated from 'lack of libido' – the former indicates an inability to sustain or obtain an erection, although sexual desire is normal; the latter indicates lack of sexual desire, but normal erection.

a) Empty

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Impotence, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

Spleen- and Heart-Yang deficiency

Impotence, premature ejaculation, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, oedema, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, spontaneous sweating, slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse. This type of impotence is very common, probably more so than the type from Kidney deficiency.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, HE-5 Tongli, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-1 Jiuwei. Moxa.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Impotence, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, hardness of hearing, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical

The following symptoms are discussed:

1. Impotence
2. Lack of libido
3. Premature ejaculation
4. Nocturnal emissions
5. Inability to ejaculate
6. Blood in the sperm
7. Cold-watery sperm
8. Priapism
9. Tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation
10. Cold genitals
11. Contraction of the scrotum
12. Loose scrotum
13. Scrotum drooping to one side
14. Swollen scrotum
15. Swollen and oozing scrotum
16. Pale scrotum
17. Red scrotum
18. Purple scrotum
19. Dark scrotum
20. Itchy scrotum

headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Kidney-Essence deficiency

Impotence, softening of bones in adults, deafness, weakness of the knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower backache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus; normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-52 Zhishi, KI-13 Qixue.

b) Full

Damp-Heat in the Lower-Burner

Impotence, burning on urination, sperm in urine, difficult urination, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, LI-11 Quchi, Ren-3 Zhongji, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.



CLINICAL NOTE

- In my experience, in young men, impotence is due more often to a Heart disharmony than to a deficiency of Kidney-Yang.
- In treatment with acupuncture, I treat the Heart (HE-7 Shenmen, Du-24 Shenting and Ren-15 Jiuwei with Ren-4 Guanyuan).
- In treatment with herbal medicine do not forget to add one or two herbs to invigorate Blood, especially Dan Shen (*Radix Salviae miltiorrhizae*).

2. LACK OF LIBIDO

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 45](#)

In Chinese medicine, libido depends on the state of the Fire of the Gate of Life (*Ming Men*), which represents the Fire within the Kidneys and is also called the Minister Fire. A deficiency of this Fire may cause lack of libido in both men and women (and also infertility), whereas an excess of this Fire may cause excessive sexual desire.

a) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Lack of libido, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Heart-Yang deficiency

Lack of libido, premature ejaculation, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, spontaneous sweating, slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Heart-Blood deficiency

Lack of libido, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

d) Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency

Lack of libido, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, poor appetite, loose stools, tiredness, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

e) Liver-Qi stagnation

Lack of libido, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, Wiry pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

In my experience, lack of libido in men is often caused by a Heart deficiency, whereas in women, by a Kidney deficiency.

3. PREMATURE EJACULATION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 45](#)

a) Empty

Kidney-Qi not firm

Premature ejaculation, dribbling of urine that is worse after sex, clear-frequent urination, weak-stream urination, incontinence of urine, soreness and weakness of the lower back, weak knees, tiredness, dragging-down feeling in the lower abdomen, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Du-4 Mingmen.

Spleen- and Heart-Yang deficiency

Premature ejaculation, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, oedema, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, spontaneous sweating, a slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, HE-5 Tongli, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-15 Jiuwei. Moxa.

b) Full

Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Premature ejaculation, burning on urination, urinary difficulty, dark urine, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or hypogastrium; bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-11 Quchi, Ren-5 Shimen, Ren-3 Zhongji.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

Heart-Qi descending plays a role in ejaculation. Therefore premature ejaculation may be due to Heart-Qi deficiency. For this reason, I treat the Heart and Kidneys.

4. NOCTURNAL EMISSIONS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 45](#)

'Nocturnal emissions' indicates ejaculation during sleep; this symptom always has 'pride of place' among Kidney-deficiency symptoms in Chinese books. In the West, this symptom is relatively rare, and it is not even considered a 'symptom' unless it occurs very frequently (e.g., once a week or more). There are cultural reasons this symptom always has a prominent place among Kidney-deficiency symptoms in Chinese books: in ancient times, ejaculation during sleep, especially if with sexual dreams, was considered to be due to the man having intercourse with female ghosts at night; such ghosts were considered very dangerous because they robbed men of their vital Essence.

a) Heart-Fire

Nocturnal emissions with dreams, premature ejaculation, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Spleen-Qi and Heart-Blood deficiency

Nocturnal emissions without dreams, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Nocturnal emissions with dreams, premature ejaculation, excessive sexual desire, palpitations, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, poor memory, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip and a Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Minister Fire blazing upwards

Nocturnal emissions with dreams, premature ejaculation, excessive sexual desire, thirst, agitation, feeling of heat, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

e) Kidney-Qi not firm

Nocturnal emissions without dreams, premature ejaculation, dribbling of urine that is worse after sex, clear-frequent urination, weak-stream urination, incontinence of urine, soreness and weakness of the lower back, weak knees, tiredness, dragging-down feeling in the lower abdomen, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

f) Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner

Nocturnal emissions with dreams, burning on urination, dark and turbid urine, itchy scrotum, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

g) Kidney-Essence deficiency

Nocturnal emissions without dreams, lack of libido, impotence, softening of bones in adults, deafness, weakness of the knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower backache, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency, Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

5. INABILITY TO EJACULATE

a) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Inability to ejaculate, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

b) Blood stasis in the Lower Burner

Inability to ejaculate, abdominal pain, mental restlessness, pain in the testis, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

6. BLOOD IN THE SPERM

a) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Blood in the sperm, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner

Blood in the sperm, turbid sperm, burning on urination, hypogastric fullness and pain, pain and swelling of the scrotum, dark urine, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Toxic Heat in the Lower Burner

Blood in the sperm, feeling of heaviness and pain of the perineum, urethral discharge, abdominal pain, Red tongue with sticky-thick-yellow coating and red points, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Blood stasis in the Lower Burner

Blood in the sperm, pain in the perineum, difficulty in urination, abdominal pain, purple complexion, Purple tongue, Firm pulse.

7. COLD-WATERY SPERM

a) Kidney-Qi not firm

Cold-watery sperm, premature ejaculation, impotence, dribbling of urine that is worse after sex, clear-frequent urination, weak-stream urination, incontinence of urine, soreness and weakness of the lower back, weak knees, tiredness, dragging-down feeling in the lower abdomen, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Cold in the Lower Burner

Cold-watery sperm, impotence, lack of libido, abdominal pain, feeling of cold in the scrotum, cold limbs, feeling cold, lower backache, pale face, abundant-pale urination, white tongue coating, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

8. PRIAPISM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

‘Priapism’ indicates persistent abnormal erection of the penis accompanied by pain and tenderness.

a) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Persistent erection, pain in the testis; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or hypogastrium; bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Persistent erection, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

9. TIREDNESS AND DIZZINESS AFTER EJACULATION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 45](#)

a) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation, impotence, decreased libido, tinnitus, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation, impotence, decreased libido, nocturnal emissions, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Spleen-Blood and Heart-Blood deficiency

Tiredness and dizziness after ejaculation, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse.

10. COLD GENITALS

a) Deficiency of Minister of Fire

Cold genitals, backache, lack of libido, impotence, feeling cold, dizziness, depression, pale-abundant urination, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel

Cold genitals, contracted scrotum; fullness and distension of the hypogastrium with pain that refers downwards to the scrotum and testis and upwards to the hypochondrium and is alleviated by warmth, straining of the testis, or contraction of the scrotum; vertical headache, feeling cold, cold hands and feet, vomiting of clear-watery fluids or dry vomiting, Pale and wet tongue with white coating, Deep-Wiry-slow pulse.

c) Cold-Dampness in the Lower Burner

Cold genitals, abdominal fullness, turbid urine, abdominal pain, feeling of heaviness, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

11. CONTRACTION OF THE SCROTUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel

Contraction of the scrotum; fullness and distension of the hypogastrium with pain that refers downwards to the scrotum and testis and upwards to the hypochondrium and is alleviated by warmth, straining of the testis, or contraction of the scrotum; vertical headache, feeling cold, cold hands and feet, vomiting of clear-watery fluids or dry vomiting, Pale and wet tongue with white coating, Deep-Wiry-slow pulse.

b) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Contraction of the scrotum, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse. Chinese books explain that this condition is due to overexertion after an acute disease.

c) Collapse of Yang

Contraction of the scrotum, chilliness, cold limbs, weak breathing, profuse sweating with sweat like pearls, absence of thirst, profuse-pale urination or incontinence of urine, loose stools, incontinence of faeces, mental confusion or unconsciousness, Pale-Wet-Short tongue, Deep-Minute pulse.

d) Collapse of Yin

Contraction of the scrotum, abundant perspiration, skin hot to the touch, hot limbs, dry mouth, retention of urine, constipation, Red, Short tongue without coating, Floating-Empty-Rapid pulse.

12. LOOSE SCROTUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Loose scrotum, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Spleen-Qi sinking

Loose scrotum, feeling of bearing down, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, bearing-down feeling, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

13. SCROTUM DROOPING TO ONE SIDE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Empty Cold in the Lower Burner

Scrotum drooping on side, feeling of cold in the abdomen, clear-abundant urination, lack of libido, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

b) Damp-Phlegm in the Lower Burner

Scrotum drooping on side, feeling of heaviness in the abdomen, obesity, urethral discharge, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

14. SWOLLEN SCROTUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Swollen scrotum, lower backache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear

urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Heart-Yang deficiency

Swollen scrotum, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, listlessness, depression, spontaneous sweating, slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the Heart region, feeling cold, cold hands, bright-pale face, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Liver-Blood deficiency with Empty Internal Wind

Swollen scrotum, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, tremors, tic, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

15. SWOLLEN AND OOZING SCROTUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Red and swollen scrotum oozing a sticky fluid, pain in the testicles; genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching; urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or hypogastrium; bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, Red tongue with redder sides and a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Toxic Heat in the Liver channel

Red, swollen, and painful scrotum oozing a sticky fluid, ulcers on the penis, pain in the testicles and perineum, genital papular skin rash and itching, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with thick-sticky-yellow coating and red spots on the root and sides, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

16. PALE SCROTUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pale scrotum, lower backache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

17. RED SCROTUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Red scrotum, pain in the testis; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or hypogastrium; bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Toxic Heat in the Liver channel

Red scrotum; pain, swelling, redness, and itching of the testis; dark urine, burning on urination, hypogastric fullness and distension, painful penis, thick-sticky-yellow tongue coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

18. PURPLE SCROTUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Liver-Blood stasis

Purple scrotum, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

b) Damp-Heat with Blood stasis in the Liver channel

Purple scrotum, persistent erection, pain in the testis, tenderness and pain of the penis, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine; fullness of the

hypochondrium, abdomen, or hypogastrium; bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, masses in the abdomen, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Red tongue with purplish sides and sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

19. DARK SCROTUM

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Stagnation of Cold in the Liver channel

Dark scrotum, straining of the testis or contraction of the scrotum, fullness and distension of the hypogastrium with pain that refers downwards to the scrotum and testis and upwards to the hypochondrium and is alleviated by warmth, vertical headache, feeling cold, cold hands and feet, vomiting of clear-watery fluids or dry vomiting, Pale and wet tongue with white coating, Deep-Wiry-slow pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dark scrotum, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

20. ITCHY SCROTUM

a) Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner

Itchy and burning scrotum, sweaty scrotum, burning on urination, dark urine, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippy-Rapid pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Itchy scrotum, dry skin, bleeding on scratching, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Cold-Dampness in the Lower Burner

Itchy and sweaty scrotum, feeling of heaviness of the scrotum, turbid urine, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippy-Slow pulse.

21. PAIN AND ITCHING OF THE PENIS

a) Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner

Pain and itching of the penis, dark urine, burning on urination, turbid urine, irritability, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippy-Rapid pulse.

b) Blood stasis in the Lower Burner

Pain in the penis, hypogastric pain, blood in the urine, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Pain and itching of the penis, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, dark-scanty urine, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Heart-Fire

Pain and itching of the penis, dark urine, burning on urination, premature ejaculation, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

22. SOFT AND WITHERED PENIS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Liver-Qi deficiency

Soft and withered penis, timidity, propensity to being easily startled, difficulty in making decisions, sighing, depression, lack of plans, nervousness, lack of courage and initiative, restless dreams, dizziness, blurred vision,

floaters, mild hypochondrial discomfort, Pale tongue, pulse Empty on the left.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Soft and withered penis, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to sip water, lower backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Soft and withered penis, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Phlegm and Blood stasis in the Lower Burner

Soft and withered penis, inability to ejaculate, abdominal pain, feeling of heaviness in the abdomen, mental restlessness, pain in the testis, Swollen and Purple tongue, Wiry-Slippy pulse.

23. SWELLING AND PAIN OF THE TESTICLES

a) Cold in the Lower Burner

Swelling and pain of the testicles, abdominal pain, pale urine, feeling cold, white tongue coating, Deep-Tight pulse.

b) Cold-Dampness in the Lower Burner

Swelling of the testicles with slight pain, abdominal fullness and pain, feeling of heaviness, turbid urine, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippy-Slow pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Lower Burner

Swelling and pain of the testicles, abdominal fullness and pain, feeling of heaviness, dark and turbid urine, burning on urination, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippy-Rapid pulse.

d) Stagnation of Qi in the Lower Burner

Swelling and pain of the testicles that comes and goes, abdominal distension, irritability, Wiry pulse.

e) Toxic Heat in the Lower Burner

Swelling, pain, and hardness of the testicles, hypogastric pain, burning on urination, swelling of the scrotum, fever, thirst, Red tongue with thick-sticky-yellow coating and red spots on the root, Slippy-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

24. REDNESS AND SWELLING OF THE GLANS PENIS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Toxic Heat in the Liver channel

Redness and swelling of the glans penis, painful urination, thick urethral discharge, hypogastric pain, Red tongue with red points on the side and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid.

b) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Redness and swelling of the glans penis, persistent erection, pain in the testis, tenderness and pain of the penis, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or hypogastrium; bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippy-Wiry-Rapid pulse, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippy-Wiry pulse.

25. PEYRONIE'S DISEASE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

Peyronie's disease is an unnatural curvature of the penis, noticeable during an erection. It may prevent a complete erection due to plaque or scar tissue inside the penis. The curvature may also cause a painful erection that may be so severe as to make intercourse impossible.

a) Blood stasis in the Liver channel

Peyronie's disease, painful curvature of the penis, painful erection, hypogastric pain, painful urination, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse.

b) Dampness in the Lower Burner with Blood stasis in the Liver channel

Peyronie's disease, painful curvature of the penis, painful erection, swelling and hardening under the skin of the penis, feeling of heaviness and fullness of the lower abdomen, urethral discharge, hypogastric pain, painful urination, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue with sticky coating, Wiry-Slippy or Firm-Slippy pulse.

c) Blood stasis in the Liver channel with Kidney-Yang deficiency

Peyronie's disease, curvature of the penis, soft erection, hypogastric pain, painful urination, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue with purplish sides, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Cold in the Liver channel with Blood stasis

Peyronie's disease, painful curvature of the penis, painful erection, straining of the testis or contraction of the scrotum; fullness and distension of the hypogastrium with pain that refers downwards to the scrotum and testis and upwards to the hypochondrium and is alleviated by warmth; vertical headache, feeling cold, cold hands and feet, vomiting of clear-watery fluids or dry vomiting, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, purple nails and lips, purple or dark complexion, Bluish-Purple tongue, white coating, Deep-Wiry-Slow pulse.

26. PENIS ULCERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Red ulcers on the penis, oozing of fluid, swelling and pain of the penis, genital papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching, urinary difficulty, burning on urination, dark urine; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or hypogastrium; bitter taste, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippy-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver-Fire

Painful, red ulcers on the penis, oozing a sticky-yellow fluid, swelling and redness of the penis, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Kidney deficiency with Dampness

Ulcers on the penis, itching, oozing a sticky fluid, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, a feeling of fullness and heaviness of the lower abdomen, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Deep-Weak and slightly Slippy pulse.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Ulcers on the penis, edges of the ulcers not raised, not painful, dizziness, tinnitus, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, malar flush, dry eyes, blurred vision, lower backache, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, dark-scanty urine, scanty menstruation, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Toxic Heat

Ulcers on the penis with itching, heat, and pain; thirst, feeling of heat, skin rashes, Red tongue with thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

27. LOSS OF PUBIC HAIR

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Kidney-Essence deficiency

Loss of pubic hair, softening of bones in adults, deafness, weakness of the knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, hair falling out or premature greying of the hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower backache, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus; normal-coloured tongue and Floating-Empty or Leather pulse if Kidney-Essence deficiency occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale tongue and Deep-Weak pulse if it occurs against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

b) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Loss of pubic hair, lower backache, cold and weak knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, impotence, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

28. EXCESSIVE PUBIC HAIR

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

a) Phlegm and Blood stasis

Excessive pubic hair, pain in the genital area, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen and Purple tongue, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Excessive pubic hair, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to sip water, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

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The following conditions are discussed:

1. Spontaneous sweating
2. Night-sweating
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5. Unilateral sweating
6. Sweating on the head
7. Sweating on the chest
8. Sweating of hands and feet
9. Sweating of the palms
10. Sweating in the axillae
11. Absence of sweating

1. SPONTANEOUS SWEATING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 41](#)

a) Empty

Lung-Qi Deficiency

Spontaneous sweating that is worse on exercise, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Lung-Yang deficiency

Spontaneous sweating that is worse on exercise, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, feeling cold, cold hands, Pale and wet tongue, Weak pulse.

Full Heat

Profuse, spontaneous sweating, feeling of heat, thirst, mental restlessness, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. This may be Full-Heat in the Heart, Liver, Lungs, or Stomach.

Phlegm-Heat

Profuse daytime sweating, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, mental restlessness, thirst with no desire to drink, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse. This can be Phlegm-Heat affecting the Lungs, Stomach, or Heart.

Invasion of Wind-Cold with prevalence of Wind

Slight sweating, aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Slow pulse. This is due to a disharmony between Nutritive and Defensive Qi.

Wind-Dampness on the Exterior

Spontaneous sweating, aversion to cold, fever, swollen glands, nausea, occipital stiffness, body aches, muscle ache, feeling of heaviness of the body, swollen joints, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, headache, sticky-white coating, Floating-Slippery pulse.

Invasion of Summer-Heat

Slight sweating, fever, aversion to cold, headache, feeling of heaviness, uncomfortable sensation in the epigastrium, irritability, thirst, tongue Red in the front or sides with a white-sticky coating, Soggy and Rapid pulse.

2. NIGHT-SWEATING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 41](#)

In Chinese, Night-sweating is called *dao han*, which literally means ‘thief sweating’; this name probably refers

to the fact that night-time sweating is very depleting of the body’s energies, and it ‘robs’ the body of its Qi. Both daytime and night-time sweating deplete the body’s energy; the former depletes Qi and Yang, the latter depletes Yin. Thus both daytime and night-time sweating start a pathological vicious circle because they can derive from a deficiency, but they also aggravate that deficiency.

a) Yin deficiency

Night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, dry throat in the evening, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. This may be Yin deficiency of several different organs: Lungs, Heart, Stomach, Liver, Kidneys, and Spleen.

b) Yin deficiency with Empty heat

Profuse night-sweating, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, dry mouth at night with a desire to drink in small sips, malar flush, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Damp-heat in Stomach and Spleen

Night-sweating, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Heart

Night-sweating, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. This is less common than the night-sweating from Yin deficiency and it usually occurs in women.

e) Lesser-Yang Pattern

Night-sweating, bitter taste, hypochondrial discomfort, dry throat, alternation of hot and cold feeling, irritability,

Table 76.1 Types of night-sweating

Description	Pathology	Full/Empty
Night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, dry throat in the evening, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse	Yin deficiency	Empty
Night-sweating, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, Pale tongue	Heart-Blood deficiency	Empty
Night-sweating, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating	Damp-Heat	Full
Night-sweating, bitter taste, hypochondrial discomfort, dry throat, alternation of hot and cold feeling, short-term illness	Lesser Yang pattern	Full

unilateral coating on the tongue, Wiry pulse. This can either be the Lesser-Yang pattern within the Six Stage Identification of Patterns (in which there is a prevalence of cold feeling) or the Gall-Bladder Heat pattern within the Four Level Identification of Patterns (in which there is a prevalence of hot feeling). This type of night-sweating usually follows a febrile disease.

Table 76.1 summarizes the causes of night sweating.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: Night-sweating is NOT always caused by Yin deficiency!

3. SWEATING FROM COLLAPSE

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 41

a) Collapse of Qi and Yin

Profuse sweating like oil drops, feeling of heat, body hot to the touch, thirst, collapse, Red tongue without coating, Deep-Minute-Rapid pulse.

b) Collapse of Yang

Profuse sweating like pearls, watery sweat, body cold to the touch, cold feeling, cold limbs, unconsciousness, pale face, weak breathing, Pale tongue, Hidden pulse.

4. YELLOW SWEAT

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 41; Part 1 Observation, Chapter 20

Yellow sweat was first mentioned in the 'Synopsis of Prescriptions of the Golden Cabinet' (*Jin Gui Yao Lue*, c. AD 200). In Chapter 14, in which yellow sweat is mentioned three times, it says: 'With Yellow Sweat disease there is swelling, fever, thirst and yellow sweat like *Phellodendron sap* [i.e., bright-yellow]'.¹

a) Damp-Heat

Yellow sweat like *Phellodendron sap* all over the body, fever, swelling, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, bitter taste, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved, which may be the Stomach, Spleen, Liver, or Gall-Bladder.

b) Nutritive and Defensive Qi Obstructed

Fever, sweat like *Phellodendron sap*, swelling, feeling of heaviness of the body, feeling as if there were insects crawling under the skin, thirst, difficult urination, white tongue coating, Deep pulse. This pattern is characterised by a deficiency of the Defensive Qi and a stagnation of the Nutritive Qi (this is the exact opposite of the Greater-Yang Wind Pattern); fluids are retained, Qi is obstructed, and the Bladder's function is impaired. This cause of yellow sweat is less frequent than the previous one.

c) Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat

Yellow sweat that stains the clothing, particularly in the axilla, hypochondrium, or genital region; hypochondrial or epigastric distension, slight feeling of oppression of the chest, irritability, pre-menstrual tension, irregular periods, pre-menstrual breast distension, feeling of a lump in the throat, feeling of heat, red face, thirst, propensity to outbursts of anger, heavy periods, tongue Red on the sides, Wiry and slightly Rapid pulse.

d) Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency

Yellow sweat on the upper back, hypochondrium, or head that is worse after exertion, slight shortness of breath, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This pattern is more common in the elderly.

e) Yin deficiency with Empty Heat and Dampness

Yellow sweat that stains the clothing in the axilla or genital region, greasy skin, dry throat at night, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, malar flush, insomnia, anxiety, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, excessive vaginal discharge, feeling of heaviness, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and slightly Slippery pulse.

5. UNILATERAL SWEATING

Unilateral sweating can occur on the left or the right side of the body. From an acupuncture perspective, this symptom is often due to an imbalance within the Yin or Yang Heel vessels (Yin and Yang Qiao Mai). Unilateral sweating was mentioned in the 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions' (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen*), which says in [Chapter 3](#): 'Unilateral sweating is due to a withering of the channels on that side of the body'.²

A 'withering' or weakness of the channels on one side of the body may occur as a result of an accident to that side or after a high fever that injures the Yin

fluids and leads to malnourishment of the channel of that side.

a) Wind-Phlegm

Unilateral sweating, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, unilateral numbness or tingling of a limb, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

b) Phlegm with Blood stasis

Unilateral sweating, unilateral numbness of a limb, dizziness, nausea, phlegm in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, pain in the limbs, Purple and Swollen tongue, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

c) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Unilateral sweating, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

d) Cold-Dampness

Unilateral sweating, contraction of tendons, contraction of hands, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, epigastric fullness, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling cold, cold limbs, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

e) Nutritive and Defensive Qi not harmonized

Unilateral sweating, fever, occipital headache, aversion to cold, stiff neck, Floating-Slow pulse.

f) Wind-Dampness in the Girdle Vessel

Sweating of the upper or lower half of the body, numbness of the legs, feeling of heaviness of the abdomen and legs, cold feet, pulse that is Wiry on both Middle positions.

6. SWEATING ON THE HEAD

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 41](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

a) Stomach Damp-Heat steaming upwards

Sweating on the head, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse. In this case, Dampness does not accumulate in the limbs but 'steams' upwards to the head; this is more likely to happen when Heat is pronounced.

b) Liver-Fire

Sweating on the head, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Deficient Yang floating upwards

Sweating on the head, pale complexion, cold limbs, shortness of breath, feeling cold, tiredness, Weak-Deep pulse.

d) Retention of Food with Stomach-Heat in children

Sweating on the head at night, restless sleep, waking up crying during the night, vomiting, fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium that are relieved by vomiting, nausea, vomiting of sour fluids, foul breath, sour regurgitation, belching, loose stools or constipation, poor appetite, thirst, feeling of heat, thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

7. SWEATING ON THE CHEST

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 41](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

Sweating on the chest is also called 'heart region sweating'.

a) Heart- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Sweating on the chest, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, slight depression,

spontaneous sweating, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Sweating on the chest, especially in the evening or night, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, poor memory, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, night-sweating, scanty-dark urine, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. This is a common cause of sweating in the chest area.

8. SWEATING OF HANDS AND FEET

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 41](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 14](#) and [20](#)

a) Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen

Sweating of hands and feet, hot hands, swollen fingers and toes, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, feeling of heaviness, thirst without a desire to drink, nausea, loose stools with offensive odour, feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, sticky taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Sweating of hands and feet, cold hands, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

c) Stomach- and Spleen-Yin deficiency

Sweating of hands and feet, dry mouth that is worse after sleep, dry lips, no appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools), dull or slightly burning epigastric pain, dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon, thirst but no desire to drink or a desire to drink in small sips, slight feeling of fullness after eating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or without coating in the centre, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

9. SWEATING OF THE PALMS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 41](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapters 14 and 20](#)

a) Lung-Qi Deficiency

Sweating of the hands, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Lung-Yin Deficiency

Sweating of the hands in the afternoon, cough that is dry or with scanty-sticky sputum, weak and/or hoarse voice, dry mouth and throat, tickly throat, tiredness, dislike of speaking, thin body or thin chest, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating (or with rootless coating) in the front part, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Heart-Qi Deficiency

Sweating of the hands, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

d) Heart-Yang Deficiency

Profuse sweating of the hands, cold hands, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, feeling cold, cold hands, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

e) Heart-Yin Deficiency

Sweating of the hands in the evening, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

10. SWEATING IN THE AXILLAE

The Liver and Heart channels influence the axilla.

a) Liver-Yin Deficiency with Empty Heat

Sweating in the axillae, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, insomnia, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, scanty menstruation or heavy bleeding (if Empty Heat is severe), malar flush, cramps, withered and brittle nails, dry hair and skin, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and slightly Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in liver and Gall-Bladder

Smelly sweating in the axillae; fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or epigastrium; bitter taste, poor appetite, nausea, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, mid-cycle bleeding and/or pain, burning on urination, dark urine, yellow complexion and eyes, vomiting, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

c) Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Sweating in the axillae, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, dry mouth and throat, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Heart-Fire

Sweating in the axillae, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

11. ABSENCE OF SWEATING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 41](#)

In exterior invasions of Wind, it is always important to ask about sweating; absence of sweating indicates invasion of Wind-Cold with the prevalence of Cold, and this corresponds to the Greater-Yang stage within the Six Stage Identification of Patterns. The Greater-Yang stage is always caused by the invasion of Wind-Cold, of which there are two types – one with the prevalence of Cold (in which there is no sweating), the other with the prevalence of Wind (in which there is sweating). Thus, it is very important in the initial stages of invasion of external Wind to ask about the presence or absence of Wind, especially if herbal medicine is used, because there are two quite distinct prescriptions, depending on whether there is a prevalence of Cold or Wind. These are *Gui Zhi Tang* (Ramulus Cinnamomi Decoction) for prevalence of Wind, and *Ma Huang Tang* (Ephedra Decoction) for prevalence of Cold.

In other exterior conditions, absence of sweating usually indicates Cold or Cold-Dampness in the superficial layers of the body (the space between skin and muscles).

a) Invasion of Wind-Cold

Absence of sweating, aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

b) Cold on the Exterior, heat in the Interior

Absence of sweating in any part of the body, aversion to cold, fever, restless legs, mental restlessness, thirst, sore throat, cough with yellow sputum.

Table 76.2 Pathology of sweating according to areas

Location	Pathology
Half of body	Wind-Phlegm, Qi-Blood deficiency
Head	Stomach Damp-Heat upwards, Liver-Fire, Deficient Yang floating upwards
Chest	Heart- and Spleen-Qi deficiency, Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
Hands and feet	Heat in Bright Yang, Stomach Damp-Heat, Stomach- and Spleen-Yin deficiency
Palms	Lung-Qi deficiency, Lung-Yin deficiency, Heart-Qi deficiency, Heart-Yang deficiency, Heart-Yin deficiency
Axillae	Liver-Yin deficiency, Damp-Heat in Liver and Gall-Bladder

c) Cold-Dampness on the Exterior

Absence of sweating, headache, muscle ache, feeling of heaviness of the head and limbs, painful joints, dislike of cold.

Table 76.2 summarizes the pathology of sweating according to areas.

END NOTES

1. He Ren: 1981 A New Explanation of the Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet (*Jin Gui Yao Lue Xin Jie* 金贵要略新解), Zhejiang Science Publishing House, p. 120.
2. 1979 The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions (*Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 17. First published c.100 BC.

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Skin Signs

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Greasy skin*Dampness**Damp-Phlegm**Phlegm-Heat***Dry skin***Empty**Full**Other patterns***Eczema***Full**Empty**Other patterns***Psoriasis***Blood-Heat**Blood-Heat with Wind and Dryness**Blood deficient and dry with Wind in the skin**Blood stasis**Blood stasis with Wind and Dryness**Wind and Heat in the skin**Blood Heat with Wind and Dampness in the skin**Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat***Acne***Full**Empty**Other patterns***Urticaria***Wind-Heat in the skin**Wind-Cold in the skin**Heart-Fire**Liver-Blood deficiency with internal Wind**Toxic Heat in the skin**Wind-Heat in the skin with Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency**Disharmony of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels**Blood stasis in the skin**Stomach-Heat**Blood Heat***Rosacea***Heat in Lungs and Stomach**Blood Heat**Blood stasis**Toxic Heat***Herpes simplex***Damp-Heat in the skin**Damp-Heat in the skin with Spleen-Qi deficiency**Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat in the skin**Invasion of Toxic Heat**Damp-Heat with invasion of Wind-Heat**Damp-Heat in the Liver channel**Yin deficiency with Empty Heat and Damp-Heat***Herpes zoster***Full**Other patterns***Warts***Blood deficiency and dryness**Blood Heat**Blood stasis**Damp-Heat in the Liver channel**Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat***Naevi (moles)***Blood-Heat**Damp-Heat**Blood stasis***Tinea***Damp-Heat**Toxic Heat**Wind-Heat**Dampness with chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency***Candida***Damp-Heat**Dampness**Dampness with chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency***Malignant melanoma***Blood Heat**Blood stasis**Blood-Heat with Damp-Heat***Furuncle (boil) on the head***Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen**Summer-Heat with Toxic Heat***Neck carbuncle***Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen**Empty Heat with Toxic Heat in the Stomach**Deficiency of Qi and Blood***Neck ulcers***Heat in Liver and Stomach**Toxic Heat in Lungs and Stomach*

Liver-Qi and Liver-Blood stagnation

Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Blood stasis with Phlegm

Rash in the axillae

Liver-Qi stagnation with Blood Heat

Toxic Heat

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Heart-Fire

Carbuncles on the upper back

Toxic Heat in Stomach and Lungs

Summer Heat

Red, itchy and swollen fingers

Toxic Heat in the Stomach

Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Invasion of External Toxic Heat

Nodules under the skin

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Phlegm

Phlegm-Heat

Wind-Phlegm

The following skin signs are discussed:

1. Greasy skin
2. Dry skin
3. Eczema
4. Psoriasis
5. Acne
6. Urticaria
7. Rosacea
8. Herpes simplex
9. Herpes zoster
10. Warts (moles)
11. Naevi
12. Tinea
13. Candida
14. Malignant melanoma
15. Furuncle (boil) on the head
16. Neck carbuncle
17. Neck ulcers
18. Rash in the axillae
19. Carbuncles on the upper back
20. Red itchy and swollen fingers
21. Nodules under the skin

Due to the nature of skin diseases, in most cases only the skin signs will be given for each pattern, without the other accompanying symptoms and signs pertaining to the internal organs.

1. GREASY SKIN

a) Dampness

Greasy skin, tendency to spots, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, feeling of oppression of the chest, excessive vaginal discharge, sticky tongue coating, Slippery or Soggy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved and on whether Dampness is associated with Cold or Heat.

b) Damp-Phlegm

Greasy skin, puffy face, dark rings under the eyes in chronic cases, blackheads, greasy hair, tendency to sinus problems; chronic cough with expectoration of profuse, white-sticky sputum that is easy to expectorate; feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, blurred vision, somnolence, nausea, sputum in the throat, muzziness of the head, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

c) Phlegm-Heat

Greasy skin, tendency to red papules, dark rings under the eyes in chronic cases, blackheads, greasy hair, tendency to sinus problems, red face, puffy face, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, feeling of heat, thirst with no desire to drink, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, expectoration of yellow sputum, dizziness, nausea, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

2. DRY SKIN

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Empty

Liver-Blood deficiency

Dry skin, dry hair, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Lung-Yin deficiency

Dry skin, thin hair, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with a desire to sip water, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dry skin, dry hair, dry eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Dry skin, dry hair, dry eyes, floaters in the eyes, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but with red cheek-bones, withered and brittle nails, dry skin and hair, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai.

Lung Dryness

Dry skin with acute onset, dry cough, dry throat, hoarse voice, dry tongue.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, KI-6 Zhaohai.

b) Full

Severe, chronic Blood stasis

Dry skin, dark face, dark rings under the eyes, abdominal pain, abdominal masses, painful periods, purple lips, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved. Blood stasis causes dry skin only in severe and chronic cases.

Acupuncture

BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai, LU-9 Taiyuan.

Full Heat

Dry skin, red face, feeling of heat, thirst, mental restlessness, insomnia, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Acupuncture

points depend on organ involved.

Empty Heat

Dry skin, scaly skin, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, mental restlessness, 5-palm heat, night-sweating, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the organ involved.

Acupuncture

points depend on organ involved.

c) Other patterns

Wind-Dryness invading the Lungs

Dry skin with acute onset, aversion to cold, fever, dry cough, dry throat, itchy throat, hoarse voice, sore throat, Floating pulse.

Wind in the skin

Dry skin, itchy skin; numbness or tingling of the limbs; skin eruptions that move around, come and go quickly, and affect the top part of the body. This is neither an external Wind, such as that seen in common colds and flu, nor an internal Wind, but simply 'Wind' in the skin, a condition frequently seen in skin diseases.

Liver-Blood deficiency with Empty Wind

Chronic dry skin, itchy skin, scaly skin with white scales, slight tremor of the head and/or hand, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, unilateral numbness and/or tingling of a limb, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

3. ECZEMA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Full

Damp-Heat with predominance of Heat

Red papular rash, vesicles, exudate, erosion, itching, feeling of heat of the limbs; swollen, red and painful joints; epigastric fullness, sticky and bitter taste, thirst with no desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling of heat, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-2 Dadu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Damp-Heat with predominance of Dampness

Red papular rash, vesicles, exudate, weeping skin eruptions, thickening of the skin, itching, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

b) Empty

Blood deficient and dry

Chronic eczema, pale-red skin eruptions, dry skin, erosion, itching, thickening of the skin, ridging of the skin, dry hair, brittle nails, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai.

c) Other patterns

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Chronic eczema, pale-red papular rash, vesicles, exudate, weeping skin eruptions, slight itching, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale or sallow complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, abdominal fullness, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the

stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

In my opinion, atopic eczema in children is caused by a congenital deficiency of the Defensive-Qi systems of the Lungs and Kidneys.

4. PSORIASIS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Blood-Heat

Red skin eruptions, hot limbs, itching with feeling of heat, thirst, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Blood-Heat with Wind and Dryness

Red skin eruptions, red scales, dry skin, hot limbs, intense itching with feeling of heat, thirst,

c) Blood deficient and dry with Wind in the skin

Pale red skin eruptions, dry and scaly skin with white scales, thickening of the skin, itching, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

d) Blood stasis

Purple skin eruptions (often nummular or verrucous), chronic condition, dry skin, thickening of the skin, itching, purplish limbs, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

e) Blood stasis with Wind and Dryness

Purple skin eruptions (often nummular or verrucous), chronic condition, dry scales, dry skin, thickening of the skin, intense itching, purplish limbs, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

f) Wind and Heat in the skin

Acute red skin eruptions, itching, itchy area changes from day to day, hot limbs, feeling of heat, thirst, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

g) Blood Heat with Wind and Dampness in the skin

Red, papular or vesicular skin eruptions, often in skin creases; puffy skin, exudate, scaly skin, itching, Red and Swollen tongue, Overflowing-Rapid-Slippery pulse.

h) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat

Pale-red macules covered by a thin layer of greyish-white scales, dry hair and skin, numbness or tingling of the limbs, brittle nails, dizziness, tinnitus, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, malar flush, dry eyes, blurred vision, lower backache, dry throat, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, dark-scanty urine, scanty menstruation, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

5. ACNE

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 55](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Full

Damp-Heat in the skin

Acne with red, papular eruptions, greasy skin, puffy face, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Toxic Heat in the skin

Acne with large, red, pustular eruptions that are painful; feeling of heat, red face, red eyes, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, LIV-2 Xingjian.

Toxic Heat with Blood stasis in the skin

Acne with large, dark red or purple, pustular eruptions that are painful, feeling of heat, dark face, red eyes, Reddish-Purple tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Overflowing-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, LIV-2 Xingjian, BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai.

b) Empty

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Chronic acne with pale-red, papular or vesicular eruptions that take a long time to come to a head, greasy skin, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

c) Other patterns

Heat in the Stomach and Lungs

Acne with small, red, papular eruptions on the face, chest and upper back; dry skin, blackheads, red face, feeling of heat, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Damp-Phlegm in the skin

Acne with large, pale, vesicular eruptions, greasy skin, puffy face, greasy hair, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Damp-Phlegm with Blood stasis in the skin

Acne with large, dark, purple, papular eruptions, dark complexion, puffy face, dry skin if Blood stasis predominates, greasy skin if Damp-Phlegm predominates, Purple and Swollen tongue, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

Disharmony of Penetrating and Directing Vessels

Acne that starts with puberty, greasy skin, papular eruptions that are aggravated before the period in girls. The essential characteristics of this condition are its onset at puberty and its aggravation before the period in girls. This condition can manifest with any of the above patterns.



CLINICAL NOTE

When I treat acne, especially in women, I always harmonize the Penetrating and Directing Vessels, irrespective of the pattern.

6. URTICARIA

Part 1 Observation, Chapter 21

a) Wind-Heat in the skin

Urticaria with acute onset, red wheals with distinct margins; intense, generalised itching, itchy area changes from day to day; Red tongue, Floating-Rapid pulse.

b) Wind-Cold in the skin

Urticaria with acute onset, pale or pale-red wheals, itching, Floating pulse.

c) Heart-Fire

Urticaria with large, red wheals that could be cord shaped rather than round, swelling and discolouration of the skin on scratching, itching worse at night, mental restlessness, insomnia, Red tongue with redder tip and dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Liver-Blood deficiency with internal Wind

Chronic urticaria that comes and goes with pale-red wheals and that is aggravated by overexertion, slight

itching, dry skin, dry hair, Pale and dry tongue, Fine or Choppy pulse.

e) Toxic Heat in the skin

Urticaria with bright-red or dark-red wheals that may join to form large patches, acute onset, severe itching, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

f) Wind-Heat in the skin with Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic urticaria, with pale or pale-red wheals with indistinct margins, that is aggravated by overexertion; slight itching, aggravated by eating certain foods, loose stools, tiredness, poor appetite, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

g) Disharmony of the Penetrating and Directing Vessels

Urticaria that is worse before the periods and better after, and worse in the lower part of the body and legs; slight itching.

h) Blood stasis in the skin

Urticaria with large, dark-red or purple wheals, itching that is worse at night, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

i) Stomach-Heat

Urticaria, with red wheals with distinct margins, that is elicited by eating certain foods; itching, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

j) Blood Heat

Urticaria with wheals that are very large and bright-red, itching, an intense feeling of heat, skin very hot to the touch, mental restlessness, insomnia, thirst, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

7. ROSACEA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Heat in Lungs and Stomach

Erythema of the face, especially like two large butterfly wings to the sides of the nostrils; feeling of heat, thirst, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Blood Heat

Erythema of the face with papular skin eruptions, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Blood stasis

Chronic erythema of the face with dark colour, dark, papular skin eruptions, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Choppy pulse.

d) Toxic Heat

Red, pustular rash of the cheeks with swelling of the nose, feeling of heat, insomnia, thirst, mental restlessness, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

8. HERPES SIMPLEX

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the skin

Red papular or vesicular skin eruptions around the mouth or nostrils, erythema, itching, pain, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the skin with Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic, red, papular or vesicular skin eruptions around the mouth or nostrils that come and go and are aggravated by over-exertion; erythema, slight itching, Pale tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Soggy-Rapid pulse.

c) Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat in the skin

Dark-red, papular or pustular skin eruptions around the mouth or nostrils, itching, pain, feeling of heat, thirst, mental restlessness, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Invasion of Toxic Heat

Acute, red, papular eruptions around the mouth or eyes in newborn babies and infants; crying at night.

e) Damp-Heat with invasion of Wind-Heat

Acute, red, papular eruptions in the top part of the body, especially the face, with intense itching; aversion to cold, fever, headache, eye pain, tongue Red on the sides and/or front, Floating-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

f) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Papular or pustular herpes eruptions in the genital area, itching, feeling of heaviness, malaise, fever, sticky taste, tongue Red on the sides with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

g) Yin deficiency with Empty Heat and Damp-Heat

Chronic, recurrent, pale-red, lingering, papular eruptions; exudate, puffy skin, night-sweating, feeling of heat in the evening, dry mouth, desire to drink in small sips, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

9. HERPES ZOSTER

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Full Wind-Heat in the skin

Papular skin eruptions in the upper part of the body that are preceded by intense itching and later turn into vesicles oozing a clear fluid, tongue Red on the

sides and/or front with red points, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

T.B.-6 Zhigou, G.B.-31 Fengshi, Huatuojiagi points innervating affected area, local points around the lesion.

Damp-Heat in the skin

Vesicular skin eruptions oozing a sticky fluid, itching, tongue Red on the sides and/or front with red points and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Huatuojiagi points innervating affected area, local points around the lesion.

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Papular skin eruptions that later turn into vesicles oozing a sticky-yellow fluid, itching; fullness and/or pain of the hypochondrium, abdomen, or epigastrium; bitter taste, feeling of heaviness of the body, yellow vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, burning on urination, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-43 Xiashi, T.B.-6 Zhigou, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-11 Quchi, Huatuojiagi points innervating affected area, local points around the lesion.

b) Other patterns

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Late stage of herpes zoster infection, dark, papular rash, intense pain.

Toxic Heat

Painful, pustular eruptions, feeling of heat, thirst, mental restlessness, insomnia, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Blood stasis

Large, painful, dark-red or purple pustular eruptions that last a long time, mental restlessness, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

10. WARTS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Blood deficiency and dryness

Common warts, usually on the hands, dry and pale-brown colour, dry skin, dry hair, blurred vision, Pale and dry tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Blood Heat

Reddish or brown warts, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, insomnia, thirst, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Blood stasis

Dark-brown warts, dark complexion, mental restlessness, dry skin, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Genital warts on the penis or vulva and vagina, genital itching and pain, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

e) Damp-Heat with Toxic Heat

Painful genital warts with pustular eruption, feeling of heat, thirst, mental restlessness, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

11. NAEVI (MOLES)

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Blood-Heat

Red or light brown moles, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat

Brown moles in the lower part of the body, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Blood stasis

Dark-brown naevi, dark complexion, mental restlessness, dry skin, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

12. TINEA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Damp-Heat

Tinea with redness and swelling of the skin, pustular swelling of the scalp (tinea capitis), itchy vesicular rash of the feet (tinea pedis), Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Toxic Heat

Tinea with redness, pain and pronounced swelling of the skin, pustular swelling of the scalp (tinea capitis), painful pustular rash of the feet (tinea pedis), Red tongue with thick-sticky-yellow coating and red points, Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Wind-Heat

Tinea with sudden onset, with redness, itching and papular rash of the scalp; tongue Red on the sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

d) Dampness with chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic tinea, characterized by a pale-red rash with a white ring around the lesions, with scaling; excessive vaginal discharge, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale or sallow complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, abdominal fullness, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.

13. CANDIDA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Damp-Heat

Candida infection with weepy rash in the flexures of the body (under the breasts in women, axilla, groin, or between the fingers and toes), redness and itching of the skin, itchiness; soreness and redness of the vulva, vagina or penis; white plaques and swelling of the inside of the mouth, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling of heat, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Dampness

Candida infection with weepy rash in the flexures of the body (under the breasts in women, axilla, groin, or between the fingers and toes), itching of the skin; itchiness and soreness of the vulva, vagina or penis; white plaques and swelling of the inside of the mouth, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, feeling of heat, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

c) Dampness with chronic Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic candidiasis with weepy rash in the flexures of the body (under the breasts in women, axilla, groin, or between the fingers and toes), itching of the skin; itchiness and soreness of the vulva, vagina or penis; excessive vaginal discharge, white plaques and swelling of the inside of the mouth, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, feeling of heaviness of the head and body, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue with a sticky-white coating, Soggy pulse.

14. MALIGNANT MELANOMA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

a) Blood Heat

Red or bright-brown moles, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Blood stasis

Dark-red or dark-brown moles with nodules, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Blood-Heat with Damp-Heat

Brown moles with plaques, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

15. FURUNCLE (BOIL) ON THE HEAD

a) Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Painful furuncle on the head, oozing pus, greasy skin, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, feeling of heaviness, especially of the head, thirst without a desire to drink, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Summer-Heat with Toxic Heat

Furuncle on the head shaped like an egg or a plum, acute onset in summertime, white in colour, moveable, oozing pus; Red tongue, white-sticky tongue coating, Rapid pulse.

16. NECK CARBUNCLE

a) Damp-Heat in Stomach and Spleen

Carbuncle on the neck, painful, shaped like a honeycomb, oozing yellow pus; fever, headache, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, nausea, epigastric fullness; when the carbuncle breaks and oozes pus, the fever increases; thirst, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating and Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Empty Heat with Toxic Heat in the Stomach

Carbuncle on the neck that is dark in colour and does not ooze pus until the late stages; skin slow in healing after breaking; feeling of heat in the evening, dry throat, dry stools, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, insomnia, Red

tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Carbuncle on the neck that is light in colour and does not ooze pus until the late stages; skin slow to heal after breaking, oozing thin-dilute pus; poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

17. NECK ULCERS

a) Heat in Liver and Stomach

Neck ulcers that are hard and shaped like an egg, red in colour, painful and burning; headache, bitter taste, thirst, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Toxic Heat in Lungs and Stomach

Ulcers on the neck that are red, swollen and painful; thirst, headache, cough, Red tongue with dry-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Liver-Qi and Liver-Blood stagnation

Ulcers on the neck on both sides, hard like a stone, shaped like a plum or an egg, dark in colour, no change in skin colour, painful, no feeling of heat, no oozing of pus until the late stages; Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Blood stasis with Phlegm

Ulcers on the neck behind the ear, shaped like a plum, not hard, immovable, no skin colour changes, no feeling of heat, no pain; Purple and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

18. RASH IN THE AXILLAE

a) Liver-Qi stagnation with Blood Heat

Rash in the armpit, swelling and pain, feeling of heat, headache, Red tongue with redder sides and yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Toxic Heat

Red rash in the armpit, oozing pus, painful, swollen, skin hard; fever, thirst, Red tongue with red points and sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Rash in the armpit with pustular or papular eruptions, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion and eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, unilateral or bilateral thick-sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Heart-Fire

Red papular rash in the armpit, palpitations, thirst, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

19. CARBUNCLES ON THE UPPER BACK

a) Toxic Heat in Stomach and Lungs

Carbuncles on the upper back, red, swollen, painful; fever, thirst, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Rapid-Slippery-Overflowing pulse.

b) Summer Heat

Carbuncles on the upper back, sudden onset in summertime, red, swollen, painful; dizziness, fever, insomnia, Red tongue with thin-yellow coating, Floating-Rapid pulse.

20. RED, ITCHY AND SWOLLEN FINGERS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 14](#)

a) Toxic Heat in the Stomach

Red, itchy and swollen fingers; swelling of fingers, numbness, feeling of heat, thirst, Red tongue with red

points and thick-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Stomach

Red, itchy and swollen fingers; swelling of the fingers, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, thirst with no desire to drink, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Invasion of External Toxic Heat

Red, swollen and painful fingers to the side of the nails with acute onset; fingers white, shivers, fever, Floating-Rapid pulse.

21. NODULES UNDER THE SKIN

Soft nodules under the skin are, by definition, due to Phlegm. In general, they are not red, not painful, not hot and not hard; they are usually shaped like a plum and are moveable. They do not break and produce pus.

a) Spleen-Qi deficiency with Phlegm

Soft nodules under the skin, moveable, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale and Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Weak and slightly Slippery pulse.

b) Phlegm-Heat

Soft nodules under the skin that are slightly red, expectoration of yellow sputum, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heat, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Wind-Phlegm

Nodules under the skin, headache, giddiness, possibly hypertension, blurred vision, numbness of the limbs, feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, headache, Stiff and Swollen tongue, Slippery-Wiry pulse. This condition is more common in the elderly.

Emotional Symptoms

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The following emotional symptoms are discussed:

1. Propensity to anger
2. Propensity to worry
3. Sadness
4. Fear/anxiety
5. Easily startled
6. Excess joy
7. Mental restlessness
8. Severe timidity
9. Inappropriate laughter

1. PROPENSITY TO ANGER

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

a) Full

Liver-Qi stagnation

Repressed anger with occasional outbursts, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, Du-19 Houding, G.B.-13 Benshen, HE-7 Shenmen.

Liver-Yang rising

Propensity to outbursts of anger, irritability, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-13 Benshen, Du-19 Houding, L.I.-4 Hegu, G.B.-20 Fengchi.

Liver-Fire

Propensity to severe outbursts of anger, irritability, aggressiveness, insomnia, headache, red face, dizziness,

tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, G.B.-13 Benshen, Du-19 Houding, L.I.-4 Hegu, G.B.-20 Fengchi, L.I.-11 Quchi.



CLINICAL NOTE

Venting one's anger helps only if there is Liver-Qi stagnation; with Liver-Yang rising and Liver-Fire, venting one's anger will only fan it more.

2. PROPENSITY TO WORRY

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

a) Empty

Lung-Qi deficiency

Worry, depression, dislike of speaking, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, LU-3 Tianfu, Du-24 Shenting.

Heart- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Worry, slightly obsessive thinking, slight depression, overthinking, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Du-24 Shenting.

b) Full

Lung-Qi stagnation

Worry, mild irritability, depression, feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, feeling of oppression

or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the Right-Front position.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, LU-3 Tianfu, P-6 Neiguan, ST-40 Fenglong, Du-24 Shenting.

c) Other patterns

Heart-Blood deficiency

Worry, depression, insomnia, poor memory, anxiety, dream-disturbed sleep, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Worry that increases after the period in women, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Heart-Yin deficiency

Worry, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', palpitations, dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Worry, especially in the evening, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', palpitations, dry mouth and throat, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

1. Worry is one of the most pervasive emotional causes of disease in Western patients. It affects the Lungs and Heart, and it causes pathology of the chest and breasts.
2. Remember that worry also affects the Liver, and it may cause Liver-Qi stagnation or Liver-Yang rising.

3. SADNESS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

This includes a sad emotional state with frequent crying.

a) Empty

Lung- and Heart-Qi deficiency

Sadness, crying, depression, dislike of speaking, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, LU-7 Lieque, LU-3 Tianfu, HE-7 Shenmen, Du-24 Shenting.

Heart-Blood deficiency

Sadness, crying, depression, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, propensity to be startled, poor memory, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Du-24 Shenting.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Sadness, crying, mental confusion, aimlessness, poor memory, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. This pattern is more common in women and is due to sadness affecting the Liver.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, HE-7 Shenmen, Du-24 Shenting.

b) Other patterns

Lung-Qi stagnation

Sadness, mild irritability, depression, feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the Right-Front position.

4. FEAR/ANXIETY

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

a) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Mild anxiety, timidity, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Fearful, anxious, depression, lack of will-power and motivation, insomnia, poor memory, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Mild anxiety, depression, timidity, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Liver-Blood deficiency

Mild anxiety, fear of the future, depression, feeling of aimlessness, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

e) Gall-Bladder deficiency

Fearful, timidity, irresolute and indecisive when something crops up, easily startled, dislike of speaking, lack of courage, flustered, sighing, restless dreams, insomnia, nervousness, excessive dreaming, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, Pale tongue.

f) Liver-Qi deficiency

Fearful, timidity, lack of resolve, depression, unhappy, nervousness, easily startled, lack of courage and initiative,

indecision, sighing, restless dreams, irritability, weak tendons, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, hypochondrial distension, irregular periods, Pale or normal tongue, Weak pulse.

5. EASILY STARTLED

Most of the causes of this symptom are due to Heart patterns, and the patient is likely to have a Heart crack on the tongue.

a) Heart-Blood deficiency

Easily startled, insomnia, poor memory, anxiety, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Heart-Yin deficiency

Easily startled, worse in the evening, mental restlessness, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', poor memory, anxiety, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

c) Deficiency of Heart and Gall-Bladder

Easily startled, timidity, dislike of speaking, lack of courage and initiative, indecisive, flustered, sighing, restless dreams, insomnia, nervousness, excessive dreaming, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, Pale tongue. This is an unusual pattern that actually describes the character of a person rather than a pattern, and it is based on the idea of the Gall-Bladder being the seat of courage and decisiveness.

d) Heart-Fire

Easily startled, agitation, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, feeling of heat, red face, dark urine or blood in the urine, bitter taste (after a bad night's sleep), Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing and Rapid pulse.

e) Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Easily startled while sleeping, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, mental confusion, mental restlessness, depression, manic behaviour, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

f) Liver-Qi stagnation and Blood deficiency

Easily startled, irritability, propensity to anger, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse that is also slightly Wiry on the left.

6. EXCESS JOY

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

A normal state of joy is obviously not a cause of disease. Several emotional states are included under the term 'excess joy'. First, it includes the sudden state of extreme elation deriving from joyful news. This makes Qi rise, and it expands the Heart. Second, excess joy can be interpreted as a life characterized by excessive excitement and stimulation (including that from alcohol and drugs). This also causes Qi to rise and may lead to Heart-Fire. From this perspective, 'excess joy' would be better called 'over-stimulation'. Third, excess joy is seen in certain mental conditions, such as hypomania or manic behaviour.

a) Heart-Fire

Excess joy, permanently elated mood, excessive laughter, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, dream-disturbed sleep, insomnia, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue

with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Heart Empty Heat

Excess joy, permanently elated feeling as if being driven, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, poor memory, dry mouth and throat, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Excess joy, mental confusion, excessive and inappropriate laughter, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, shouting, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

7. MENTAL RESTLESSNESS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

'Mental restlessness' is a translation of the term *fan zao*, which literally means 'vexation and restlessness'. It also includes restless legs. The term *fan zao* encompasses two different symptoms: *fan* (vexation) is due to Full Heat and pertains to the Lungs, whereas *zao* (restlessness) is due to Empty Heat and pertains to the Kidneys. *Fan* is Yang, and *zao* is Yin.

a) Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Vague mental restlessness, insomnia, restless legs, excessive dreaming, anxiety, dry throat at night, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, malar flush, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. This is a general pattern of Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat that may affect the Kidneys, Heart and Lungs.

b) Phlegm-Heat in the Stomach and Heart

Mental restlessness, mental confusion, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, shouting, depression, manic behaviour, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, burning epigastric pain, bleeding gums, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, tongue Red in the centre with a sticky-yellow coating and a Stomach/Heart crack with a rough, sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Heart-Fire

Pronounced mental restlessness, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Lung-Heat

Mental restlessness, worry, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

8. SEVERE TIMIDITY

a) Gall-Bladder deficiency

Severe timidity, indecisive, easily startled, lack of resolve, dislike of speaking, lack of courage, flustered, fearful, irresolute and indecisive when something crops up, flustered, sighing, restless dreams, insomnia, nervousness, excessive dreaming, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, Pale tongue.

b) Liver-Qi deficiency

Severe timidity, lack of resolve, unhappy, weak tendons, fearful, depression, unhappy, nervousness, easily startled, lack of courage and initiative, indecision, sighing, restless

dreams, irritability, weak tendons, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, hypochondrial distension, irregular periods, Pale or normal tongue, Weak pulse.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Severe timidity, lack of will-power, lack of confidence, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Heart- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Severe timidity, worry, inappropriately eager to please others, slight depression, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

e) Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency

Severe timidity, anxiety, lack of confidence, worry, slightly obsessive thinking, slight depression, over-thinking, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

9. INAPPROPRIATE LAUGHTER

This includes a mental state that may range from mild hypomania to full-blown manic behaviour.

a) Heart-Fire

Inappropriate laughter, manic behaviour, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Inappropriate laughter, mental confusion, agitation, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, shouting, depression, manic behaviour, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste,

c) Kidney- and Heart-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty Heat

Inappropriate laughter, insomnia, excessive dreaming, mental restlessness, anxiety, poor memory, palpitations, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip and a Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse or a pulse that is Deep and Weak on both Rear positions and Overflowing on both Front positions.

Mental and Emotional Symptoms

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1. DEPRESSION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

a) Full

Liver-Qi stagnation

Depression, moodiness, irritability, anxiety, frustration, nervous tension, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-13 Benshen, Du-20 Baihui, G.B.-40 Qiuxu.

Liver-Qi stagnation with Qi-Phlegm

Depression, moodiness, irritability, feeling of a lump in the throat, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, pre-menstrual tension, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-13 Benshen, Du-20 Baihui, G.B.-40 Qiuxu, ST-40 Fenglong.

b) Empty

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Depression, lack of motivation, lack of will power, lack of initiative, exhaustion, desire to curl up, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination,

The following mental and emotional symptoms are discussed:

1. Depression
2. Depression and manic behaviour
3. Depressive phase

urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Du-4 Mingmen, Du-20 Baihui, G.B.-40 Qixu.

Heart-Blood deficiency

Depression, tearfulness, sadness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Du-20 Baihui, G.B.-40 Qixu.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Depression, sadness, lack of direction, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

Du-20 Baihui, G.B.-40 Qixu, LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Spleen- and Heart-Blood deficiency

Depression, brooding, slight obsessive thinking, anxiety, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, tiredness, weak muscles, loose stools, poor appetite, scanty periods, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Du-20 Baihui, G.B.-40 Qixu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Du-24 Shenting.

c) Other patterns

Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat rebelling upwards

Depression, anxiety, insomnia, moodiness, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, slight feeling of oppression of the chest, pre-menstrual tension, irregular periods, pre-menstrual breast distension, feeling of lump in the

throat, feeling of heat, red face, thirst, heavy periods, tongue Red on the sides, Wiry and slightly Rapid pulse.

Heart-Yang deficiency

Depression, lack of motivation, easily startled, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, spontaneous sweating, slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the heart region, feeling cold, cold hands, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Depression, anxiety in the evening, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, poor memory, palpitations, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip and a Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Depression, mental restlessness, anxiety, agitation, phobias, insomnia, excessive dreaming, mental confusion, rash behaviour, shouting, manic behaviour, feeling of heat in the heart region, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of phlegm, sputum in the throat, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-dry-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Heart-Blood stasis

Depression, mental restlessness, insomnia, agitation in the evening, excessive dreaming, palpitations, stabbing or pricking chest pain that may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder, feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of lips and nails, cold hands, tongue entirely Purple or Purple only on the sides in the chest areas, Choppy or Wiry pulse.

Heat in the Gall-Bladder

Depression, mental restlessness, short temper, irritability, nausea, dry throat, bitter taste, feeling of fullness of the hypochondrium, blurred vision, unilateral yellow tongue coating, Wiry pulse.

Worry injuring the Mind

Depression, feeling as if in a trance, absentmindedness, lack of initiative, sadness, worry, crying, yawning, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Diaphragm Heat

Depression, mental restlessness, feeling of anxiety in the chest, feeling of heat in the heart region, feeling of stuffiness of the chest, thirst, nausea, yellow tongue coating, Rapid pulse. This is a short-term depression caused by residual Heat following an invasion of Wind-Heat.



CLINICAL NOTE

1. In chronic depression I often use BL-23 Shenshu and BL-52 Zhishi to stimulate the Will-Power (Zhi) irrespective of the pattern.
2. I also use G.B.-40 QiuXu to stimulate the movement of the Hun, the lack of which is a feature of depression.

2. DEPRESSION AND MANIC BEHAVIOUR

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

a) Depressive phase

Stagnation of Qi and Phlegm

Depression, apathy, dull thinking, incoherent speech, muttering to oneself, irritability, moodiness, does not remember to eat, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency

Depression, excessive dreaming, mental confusion, easily startled, sadness, crying, shouting, shutting windows, muttering to oneself, brooding, slight obsessive thinking, anxiety, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, tiredness, weak muscles, loose stools, poor appetite, scanty periods, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

b) Manic phase

Phlegm-Fire harassing the Mind

Manic behaviour, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, propensity to outbursts of anger, shouting, scolding or hitting people, overspending of money, exceptional physical strength, having several projects on the go simultaneously, staying up all night, forgetting to eat, singing, mental restlessness, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, uncontrolled laughter, shouting, manic behaviour, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of phlegm, sputum in the throat, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-dry-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse. Red and Swollen tongue with thick-sticky-yellow coating and a deep Heart crack with a rough-sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Wiry-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Stomach Phlegm-Fire affecting the Heart

Manic behaviour, desire to climb to high places, shouting, laughing, singing, taking off one's clothes, insomnia, mental restlessness, burning epigastric pain, thirst without a desire to drink, bleeding gums, dry stools, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, tongue Red in the centre with a sticky-yellow coating and a Stomach crack with a rough, sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Stomach and Pericardium Fire

Manic behaviour, mental restlessness, inability to lie down, hallucinations, incoherent speech, excessive dreaming, red face, hot hands, palpitations, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

Fire injuring Yin

Chronic manic behaviour, excessive talking, easily startled, mental restlessness, loss of weight, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: 'Manic' behaviour does not occur only in its extreme form; it also occurs to a mild degree in many patients.

3. ANXIETY

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 44](#)

a) Empty

Heart-Blood deficiency

Mild anxiety, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Heart-Yin deficiency

Vague anxiety that is worse in the evening, insomnia, poor memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, dream-disturbed sleep, propensity to be startled, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', palpitations, dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

Acupuncture

HE-6 Yinxi, HE-7 Shenmen, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-14 Jueque.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Vague anxiety that is worse in the evening, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

b) Empty/full

Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Anxiety that is worse in the evening, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', palpitations, dry mouth and throat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-6 Yinxi, HE-7 Shenmen, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-14 Jueque, HE-8 Shaofu.

Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Anxiety, mental restlessness, agitation that is worse in the evening, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, poor memory, palpitations, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip and a Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-6 Yinxi, HE-7 Shenmen, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-14 Jueque, HE-8 Shaofu, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, KI-2 Rangu.

c) Full

Heart-Fire

Severe anxiety, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, feeling of heat, red face, dark urine or blood in the urine, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, Du-24 Shenting, Ren-15 Jiuwei, HE-7 Shenmen.

Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Severe anxiety, agitation, mental restlessness, manic behaviour, phobias, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, mental confusion, depression,

palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-40 Fenglong, Du-24 Shenting, Ren-15 Jiuwei.

d) Other patterns

Heart-Blood stasis

Severe anxiety, agitation, palpitations, stabbing or pricking chest pain that may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder, feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of the lips and nails, cold hands, tongue entirely Purple or Purple only on the sides in the chest areas, Choppy or Wiry pulse.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Mild anxiety, mild depression, lack of direction, insomnia, excessive dreaming, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Vague anxiety, depression, lack of direction, insomnia, excessive dreaming, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, dry hair, dry nails, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Anxiety, depression, irritability, moodiness, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse.

Liver-Fire

Severe anxiety, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver-Yang rising

Anxiety, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, Wiry pulse.

Deficiency of Qi of the Heart and Gall-Bladder

Mild anxiety, insomnia, timidity, absentmindedness, indecisiveness, easily startled, palpitations, slight breathlessness, tiredness, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Diaphragm Heat

Anxiety, feeling of heat and stuffiness in the region under the heart, thirst, dry mouth, irritability, insomnia, Red tongue, Rapid pulse. This pattern is caused by residual Heat following an invasion of Wind-Heat.

4. IRRITABILITY

Irritability is a common emotional complaint. It includes feeling irritable frequently, flying off the handle easily, feeling frustrated, and similar emotional states. Of the traditional seven emotions, irritability is akin to 'anger', but it encompasses a broader range of emotional states than 'anger' and is generally not so intense as anger. A propensity to anger is generally due to Liver patterns, whereas irritability may be caused by many different patterns affecting most organs.

a) Liver-Qi stagnation

Irritability, moodiness, pre-menstrual irritability, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, pre-menstrual tension, Wiry pulse. *'I feel extremely irritable before my periods and take it out on my family'*

b) Lung-Qi stagnation

Mild irritability, bouts of crying, sighing, sadness, depression, feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position. *'I feel this lump in the throat, I am on edge and feel like bursting into tears'*.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Severe irritability, agitation at night, hypochondrial and/or abdominal pain, painful periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, masses in the abdomen, purple nails

and lips, purple or dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry or Firm pulse. *'I seethe with resentment'*.

d) Heart-Blood stasis

Irritability, obsessive thinking, palpitations, stabbing or pricking chest pain that may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder, feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of the lips and nails, cold hands, tongue entirely Purple or Purple only on the sides in the chest areas, Choppy or Wiry pulse. *'My mind is constantly judging and I feel resentful'*.

e) Liver-Yang rising

Severe irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, headache, dizziness, tinnitus, Wiry pulse. *'I fly off the handle easily'*.

f) Liver-Fire

Severe irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse. *'I explode into a rage'*.

g) Heart-Fire

Severe irritability, rage, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. *'I feel irritable, impatient and angry'*.

h) Lung-Heat

Irritability, bouts of crying, restlessness, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. *'I feel frustrated, weepy and irritable'*.

i) Stomach-Heat

Irritability, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, restlessness, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation,

nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. *'I feel often angry and obsessive'*.

j) Liver-Blood deficiency

Mild irritability, mild impatience, vague anxiety, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. *'I feel lost, overwhelmed and on edge'*.

k) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Mild irritability, vague anxiety and fear that is worse in the evening, lack of will-power, easily annoyed, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, poor memory, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower back ache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. *'I feel helpless, unmotivated and on edge in the evening'*.

l) Heart-Blood deficiency

Mild irritability, sadness, vague anxiety, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. *'I feel sad and on edge'*.

m) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Vague irritability, mental restlessness that is worse in the evening, feeling on edge, feeling 'hot and bothered', depression, anxiety, insomnia, dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, 5-palm heat, feeling of heat in the evening, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, lower backache, constipation, dark-scanty urine, tiredness, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. *'I feel hot and bothered'*.

n) Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Irritability, mental restlessness that is worse in the evening, feeling on edge, sadness, anxiety, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, propensity to be startled, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', palpitations, poor

memory, dry mouth and throat, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. *'I feel sad and hot and bothered'*.

o) Damp-Heat

Irritability, mental restlessness, slightly obsessive thinking, feeling of heaviness and fullness of the epigastrium, sticky taste, feeling of heat, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse. *'I feel heavy, yucky and irritable'*. Other manifestations depend on the organ involved.

5. SCHIZOPHRENIA

a) Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency

Absentmindedness, insomnia, excessive dreaming, lack of concentration, forgetfulness, anxiety, sadness, hearing voices, depression, mental confusion, easily startled, crying, shouting, muttering to oneself, brooding, obsessive thinking, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, tiredness, weak muscles, loose stools, poor appetite, scanty periods, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

b) Stagnation of Qi and Phlegm

Melancholy, apathy, mental dullness, incoherent speech, mumbling to oneself, hearing voices, moodiness, irritability, inappropriate laughing and crying, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, feeling of a lump in the throat,

pre-menstrual tension, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

c) Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Acute onset, hallucinations, hearing voices, violent behaviour, abusiveness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, destructive behaviour, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, uncontrolled laughter or crying, shouting, muttering to oneself, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Phlegm-Fire and Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Hallucinations, hearing voices, abusiveness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, destructive behaviour, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, uncontrolled laughter or crying, shouting, muttering to oneself, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dry throat at night, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red and Swollen tongue with redder tip and without coating, Heart crack with rough-dry-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Floating-Empty-Rapid pulse.

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Mental Difficulties

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Poor memory*Empty**Full**Other patterns***Difficulty in concentration***Empty**Full***Learning difficulty in children***Spleen- and Heart-Blood deficiency**Emptiness of the Sea of Marrow***Hyperactivity***Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Liver-Yang rising**Qi deficiency of Spleen and Heart with floating Yang**Liver-Fire**Phlegm-Fire**Blood stasis leading to obstruction of the upper orifices*

The following mental difficulties will be discussed:

1. Poor memory
2. Difficulty in concentration
3. Learning difficulty in children
4. Hyperactivity

1. POOR MEMORY

a) Empty

Qi and Blood deficiency of the Heart and Spleen

Poor memory of distant events, excessive dreaming, insomnia, anxiety, poor memory, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, tiredness, weak muscles, loose stools, poor appetite, scanty periods, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-49 Yishe, Du-20 Baihui, Du-24 Shenting.

Kidney deficiency

Poor memory of recent events, absent-minded, slow thinking, premature greying of the hair or balding, dizziness, tinnitus, lower backache. Other symptoms or signs depend on whether there is Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-52 Zhishi, KI-3 Taixi, Du-20 Baihui, Du-24 Shenting.

b) Full

Turbid Phlegm in the Heart

Poor memory, somnolence, absentmindedness, insomnia, poor concentration, feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

P-5 Jianshi, HE-5 Tongli, Du-20 Baihui, Du-24 Shenting, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

c) Other patterns

Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Poor memory, excessive dreaming, insomnia, anxiety, mental restlessness, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, feeling of heat in the

evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip and a Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Heart-Blood stasis

Poor memory, insomnia, agitation, palpitations, stabbing or pricking chest pain that may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder, feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of the lips and nails, cold hands, tongue entirely Purple or Purple only on the sides in the chest areas, Choppy or Wiry pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

1. Du-24 Shenting is an important point to stimulate memory.
2. Three factors overlap to cause poor memory: the Shen of the Heart, the Yi of the Spleen, and the Zhi of the Kidneys.

2. DIFFICULTY IN CONCENTRATION

a) Empty

Spleen-Qi and Spleen-Blood deficiency

Poor concentration, difficulty in applying oneself to study, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, scanty menstruation, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jique, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-49 Yishe, Du-20 Baihui, Du-24 Shenting.

Heart-Blood deficiency

Poor concentration, poor memory, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jique, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Du-20 Baihui, Du-24 Shenting.

Kidney deficiency

Poor concentration, poor memory, feeling of emptiness of the head, dizziness, tinnitus, lower backache. Other

symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guayuan, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-52 Zhishi, KI-3 Taixi, Du-20 Baihui, Du-24 Shenting.

b) Full

Phlegm

Poor concentration that is worse in the morning, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, dizziness, blurred vision, sticky taste, dull frontal headache, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue with a sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

P-5 Jianshi, HE-5 Tongli, Du-20 Baihui, Du-24 Shenting, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Dampness

Poor concentration that is worse in the morning, feeling of heaviness of the head, sticky taste, dull frontal headache, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, Du-20 Baihui, Du-24 Shenting, ST-40 Fenglong, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.



CLINICAL NOTE

I use Du-20 Baihui to stimulate concentration.

3. LEARNING DIFFICULTY IN CHILDREN

a) Spleen- and Heart-Blood deficiency

Learning difficulty, difficulty in concentration, poor memory, mental dullness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, propensity to be startled, flaccid muscles, lassitude, apathy, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, tiredness, weak muscles, loose stools, poor appetite, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Emptiness of the Sea of Marrow

Learning difficulty, weak child, mental dullness, slow growth, slow development (in walking, speech, teeth, hair), dizziness, poor memory, deafness, a feeling of emptiness of the head, blurred vision.

4. HYPERACTIVITY

The discussion of hyperactivity below is centred on children, but it is applicable to adults as well.

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Liver-Yang rising

Hyperactivity, insomnia, thin body, slow development, restlessness, propensity to outbursts of anger, clumsiness, dizziness, dull occipital or vertical headache, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, headache, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and slightly Wiry pulse.

b) Qi deficiency of Spleen and Heart with floating Yang

Hyperactivity, fat body, slow development, poor memory, poor concentration, mental dullness, poor sleep, difficulty

in speech, stuttering, lassitude, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

c) Liver-Fire

Hyperactivity, thin body, insomnia, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

d) Phlegm-Fire

Hyperactivity, expectoration of sputum, catarrh, chronic 'glue ear', poor concentration, feeling of heaviness, restlessness, speech difficulty, sputum in the throat, chronic catarrh, feeling of heat, thirst without a desire to drink, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

e) Blood stasis leading to obstruction of the upper orifices

Hyperactivity, mental restlessness, agitation, poor sleep, dark complexion, history of difficult birth, propensity to outbursts of anger, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

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The following sleep symptoms are discussed:

1. Insomnia
2. Excessive dreaming
3. Somnolence
4. Sleep-talking
5. Sleep-walking
6. Snoring

1. INSOMNIA

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 40](#)

Insomnia includes difficulty in falling or staying asleep.

a) Empty

Heart-Blood deficiency

Insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood of the Spleen and Heart

Insomnia, anxiety, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, propensity to be startled, palpitations, dizziness, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, tiredness, weak muscles, loose stools, shortness of breath on exertion, slight abdominal distension, poor appetite, scanty periods, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-49 Yishe, Du-19 Houding, Du-24 Shenting.

Heart-Yin deficiency

Insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', poor memory, palpitations, dry mouth and throat, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating or with rootless coating, Floating-Empty pulse, especially on the left-Front position.

Acupuncture

HE-6 Yinxi, HE-7 Shenmen, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-14 Jueque, Du-19 Houding.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Insomnia, difficulty in falling asleep, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-47 Hunmen, G.B.-13 Benshen.

Liver-Yin deficiency

Insomnia, difficulty in falling asleep, dreaming, dizziness, numbness or tingling of the limbs, blurred vision, floaters in the eyes, dry eyes, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion but with red cheek-bones, withered and brittle nails, dry skin and hair, night-sweating, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Fine or Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-47 Hunmen, G.B.-13 Benshen, KI-6 Zhaohai.

Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Insomnia with difficulty in falling asleep, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, poor memory, palpitations, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, night-sweating, scanty-dark urine, normal-coloured tongue without coating, dizziness, tinnitus, backache, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-6 Yinxi, HE-7 Shenmen, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-14 Jueque, Du-19 Houding, KI-3 Taixi.

b) Full**Liver-Fire**

Insomnia, excessive dreaming, restless sleep, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, Du-19 Houding, G.B.-13 Benshen.

Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Restless sleep, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, mental restlessness, agitation, mental confusion, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

P-5 Jianshi, HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Du-19 Houding.

Heart-Fire

Restless sleep, dream-disturbed sleep, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, red face, dark urine or blood in the urine, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, HE-7 Shenmen, Du-19 Houding.

c) Other patterns**Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty Heat**

Insomnia, waking up frequently during the night, dream-disturbed sleep, mental restlessness, anxiety, poor memory, palpitations, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip and a Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse or a pulse that is Deep and Weak on both Rear positions and Overflowing on both Front positions.

Gall-Bladder and Heart deficiency

Easily awakened at night and easily startled, with difficulty in going back to sleep or waking up early in the morning, restless sleep, depression, timidity, propensity

to being easily startled, lack of courage and initiative, indecision, sighing, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, nervousness. Weak pulse.

Residual Heat in the diaphragm

Restless sleep, prefers to sleep propped up, inability to fall asleep, mental restlessness, feeling of oppression of the diaphragm, dry throat, epigastric discomfort, red points in the front or around the centre of the tongue, slightly Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

If a patient suffers from insomnia and headaches, the headaches will never improve until the insomnia is treated.

2. EXCESSIVE DREAMING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 40](#)

a) Liver-Fire

Excessive dreaming, nightmares, restless sleep, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Heart-Fire

Excessive dreaming, restless sleep, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Excessive dreaming, restless sleep, insomnia, waking up from nightmares, mental restlessness, agitation, mental confusion, palpitations, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, bitter taste, insomnia, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Phlegm-Fire in the Stomach

Excessive dreaming, restless sleep, insomnia, mental restlessness, burning epigastric pain, thirst without a desire to drink, bleeding gums, dry stools, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, mucus in the stools, expectoration of phlegm, Red tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Stomach crack with a rough, sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid and slightly Overflowing pulse.

e) Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Dream-disturbed sleep, dreams not too agitated, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, feeling 'hot and bothered', palpitations, dry mouth and throat, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue, redder on the tip, no coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

f) Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Dream-disturbed sleep, insomnia, depression, feeling of aimlessness, dizziness, numbness of the limbs, blurred vision, floaters in the eyes, dry eyes, diminished night-vision, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion without 'spirit' but with red cheek-bones, muscular weakness, cramps, withered and brittle nails, very dry hair and skin, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, thirst with a desire to sip fluids, Red tongue, without coating, Floating-Empty and slightly Rapid pulse.

g) Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, mental restlessness, insomnia, anxiety, poor memory, dizziness, tinnitus, deafness, backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder tip without coating, mid-line Heart crack, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse or Deep-Weak on both Rear positions and relatively Overflowing on both Front positions.

h) Heart and Gall-Bladder deficiency

Excessive dreaming, waking up easily from dreaming, absentmindedness, emotionally unstable, anxiety, and palpitations.

The following is a list of dreams and their meanings from the 'Simple Questions' and 'Spiritual Axis':

- Flying: Emptiness in the Lower Burner¹
- Falling: Fullness in the Lower Burner²
- Floods and fear: Excess of Yin³
- Fire: Excess of Yang⁴
- Killing and destruction: Yin and Yang both in Excess⁵
- Giving away things: Excess condition⁶
- Receiving things: Deficiency condition⁷
- Being angry: Liver in Excess⁸
- Crying, weeping: Lungs in Excess⁹
- Crowds: roundworms in the intestines¹⁰
- Attack and destruction: tape-worms in the intestines¹¹
- Fires: Heart deficiency¹²
- Volcanic eruptions (if the dream takes place in summertime): Heart deficiency¹³
- Laughing: Heart in Excess¹⁴
- Mountains, fire, and smoke: Heart deficiency¹⁵
- Very fragrant mushrooms: Liver deficiency¹⁶
- Lying under a tree being unable to get up (if the dream takes place in springtime): Liver deficiency¹⁷
- Forests on mountains: Liver deficiency¹⁸
- White objects or bloody killings: Lung deficiency¹⁹
- Battles and war (dream taking place in the autumn): Lung deficiency²⁰
- Worry, fear, crying, flying: Lungs in Excess²¹
- Flying and seeing strange objects made of gold or iron: Lung deficiency²²
- Being hungry: Spleen deficiency²³
- Building a house (dream taking place in late summer): Spleen deficiency²⁴
- Singing and feeling very heavy: Spleen in Excess²⁵
- Abysses in mountains and marshes: Spleen deficiency²⁶
- Swimming after a shipwreck: Kidney deficiency²⁷
- Plunging into water and being scared (dream taking place in wintertime): Kidney deficiency²⁸
- Spine being detached from the body: Kidneys in Excess (i.e., Dampness in Kidneys)²⁹
- Being immersed in water: Kidney deficiency³⁰
- Having a large meal: Stomach deficiency³¹

- Large cities: Small Intestine deficiency³²
- Open fields: Large Intestine deficiency³³
- Fights, trials, suicide: Gall-Bladder deficiency³⁴
- Voyages: Bladder deficiency³⁵
- Crossing the sea and being scared: Excess of Yin³⁶

3. SOMNOLENCE

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 44

a) Empty/Full

Spleen-Yang deficiency with Dampness

Somnolence, especially after a meal, tiredness, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, feeling of heaviness of the limbs, poor appetite, epigastric fullness, sticky taste, no thirst, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale and wet tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse. This is the most common cause of somnolence.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-49 Yishe, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Du-20 Baihui. Moxa.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Phlegm

Somnolence, poor memory, slight depression, mental confusion, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, tendency to obesity, Pale-Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-49 Yishe, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Du-20 Baihui.

b) Empty

Spleen- and Heart-Qi deficiency

Somnolence, poor memory, slight depression, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs,

loose stools, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-49 Yishe, ST-36 Zusanli, HE-5 Tongli, BL-15 Xinshu, Du-20 Baihui.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Somnolence, poor memory, lower backache, cold knees, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, impotence, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-52 Zhishi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Du-20 Baihui. Moxa



CLINICAL NOTE

I use Du-20 Baihui for somnolence.

4. SLEEP-TALKING

a) Heart-Fire

Talking in one's sleep, shouting in one's sleep, restless sleep, dreams of laughing and fires, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Talking in one's sleep, waking up during the night, dreams of laughing and fires, palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, dry mouth and throat, feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Liver-Yin deficiency

Talking in one's sleep, excessive dreaming, feeling of floating just before falling asleep, insomnia, dizziness,

blurred vision, floaters, night-sweating, dry eyes, dry hair, dry nails, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Talking in one's sleep, excessive dreaming, feeling of floating just before falling asleep, insomnia, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, night-sweating, dry eyes, dry hair, dry nails, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Gall-Bladder Heat

Talking in one's sleep, dizziness, tinnitus, bitter taste, dry throat, irritability, red face and ears, hypochondrial fullness, tongue with unilateral or bilateral yellow coating, Wiry pulse.

f) Stomach-Heat

Talking in one's sleep, restless sleep, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

g) Heart-Blood deficiency

Talking in one's sleep, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, poor memory, anxiety, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

5. SLEEP-WALKING

a) Liver-Yin deficiency

Sleep-walking, excessive dreaming, feeling of floating just before falling asleep, insomnia, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, night-sweating, dry hair, dry nails, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Sleep-walking, excessive dreaming, feeling of floating just before falling asleep, insomnia, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, night-sweating, dry eyes, dry hair, dry nails, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Sleep-walking, excessive dreaming, mental restlessness, abdominal pain, painful periods, Purple tongue, Firm pulse.

6. SNORING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 83](#); Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Loud snoring, dry throat, thirst with no desire to drink, barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heat, thirst, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Soft snoring, feeling of oppression of the chest, cough with expectoration of sticky sputum, feeling of heaviness, thirst with no desire to drink, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

c) Dry Phlegm in the Lungs

High-pitched snoring, dry cough with occasional difficult expectoration of scanty sputum, thirst with no desire to drink, dry mouth and throat, Swollen tongue with sticky-dry coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Phlegm in the Lungs with Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Soft snoring, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heaviness, weak voice, propensity to catching colds,

poor appetite, loose stools, tiredness, Pale tongue with teeth marks, Soggy pulse.

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Feeling of Cold, Feeling of Heat, Fever

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The following symptoms are discussed:

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1. FEELING OF COLD, SHIVERING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 43](#)

In this section, I shall give the acupuncture treatments separately for an Exterior and an Interior feeling of cold.

Exterior

a) Full

Invasion of exterior Wind

Aversion to cold, hot dorsum of hands, fever, occipital stiffness, occipital headache, Floating pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, LU-7 Lieque, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen (cupping).

b) Other patterns

Lesser-Yang pattern

Alternation of cold and hot feeling, mental restlessness, a bitter taste, a dry throat, blurred vision, hypochondrial discomfort, unilateral tongue coating, Wiry pulse.

Lesser-Yang pattern with predominance of Heat

Alternation of cold and hot feeling with a predominance of the latter, sweating, a feeling of oppression of the chest, vomiting, headache, mental restlessness, dry mouth, dark urine, Red tongue with an unilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry pulse.

This is also a Lesser Yang pattern but with the predominance of Heat and with some Dampness. Within the Four-Level Identification of Patterns, it is called Heat in the Gall-Bladder.

Exterior Cold and Interior Heat

Aversion to cold, fever, cold limbs, body aches, headache, thirst, mental restlessness, dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue.

This situation occurs after an invasion of external Wind when interior Heat is generated but the exterior

Cold is still there; thus exterior Cold and interior Heat co-exist. This pattern is not common.

Long-lasting invasion of Wind-Heat

Aversion to cold, fever, sweating, hot dorsum of hands. The pulse becomes quiet after sweating, the patient desires to lie down, and the limbs are cold.

Interior

a) Empty

Deficiency of Yang of the Heart and/or Lungs

Cold hands, feeling cold, shortness of breath, palpitations, Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, LU-7 Lieque, LU-9 Taiyuan, BL-13 Feishu, BL-15 Xinshu. Moxa.

Yang deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen

Cold limbs and abdomen, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, bright-white complexion, loose stools, feeling cold, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu. Moxa.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Cold legs, knees, feet, back; lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuliu, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

Heart-Blood deficiency

Cold hands, feeling cold, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, poor memory, anxiety, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

Liver-Blood deficiency

Cold feet hands, feeling cold, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

b) Full

Internal Cold

Cold feeling, no fever, dorsum of hands not hot, cold feet, cold limbs.

Acupuncture

Du-4 Mingmen, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-8 Shenque. Moxa. Other points depend on the organ involved.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Cold hands and feet (especially fingers and toes), irritability, depression, hypochondrial discomfort, sighing, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou.

c) Other patterns

Phlegm in the Interior

Cold feeling, cold limbs, a feeling of heaviness of the limbs, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Slippery pulse. Often Phlegm may cause a cold feeling and cold limbs because it may obstruct the circulation of the Defensive Qi; this may happen even in the case of Phlegm-Heat and may account for contradictory hot and cold signs.

Heat stagnating in the Interior (True Heat-False Cold)

Cold feeling, cold limbs, thirst, mental restlessness, dry throat, dry stools, red tongue, deep pulse. This is due to interior Heat blocking Yang Qi in the Interior so that it cannot extend towards the Exterior: however, this situation is quite rare.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

- Apart from obvious differences in patterns, the cold feeling from exterior invasions manifests with typical 'waves' of cold feeling and shivering.
- External Cold is not relieved by covering oneself with blankets, whereas internal Cold is.

2. FEVER

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 43](#)

Acute fever

In acute fevers the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels provides the best framework of interpretation. Within the Four Levels, the Defensive-Qi level is the only Exterior one, and therefore there is fever and shivering with a slight cold feeling simultaneously. At the other three levels (Qi, Nutritive-Qi, and Blood), Heat is in the Interior and the fever is interior. The Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels describes the symptomatology of invasions of Wind-Heat. However, fever, to a lesser degree, may be present also in invasions of Wind-Cold for which the Identification of Patterns according to the Six Stages is used.

a) Full

Invasion of external Wind-Heat in the Lungs' Defensive-Qi portion

Fever with a slight aversion to cold, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on front part, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Heat in the Lungs (Qi level)

Fever, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU- 5 Chize, LU-1 Tianfu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

b) Other patterns

Invasion of External Wind-Cold

A slight fever with a pronounced cold feeling and possibly shivering, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear-watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches, thin-white tongue coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Invasion of Summer-Heat

Fever, slight cold feeling, no sweating, headache, a feeling of heaviness, an uncomfortable feeling of the epigastrium, irritability, thirst, Red tongue, white coating, Weak-Floating and Rapid pulse.

Heat in Bright Yang – Channel pattern

Fever, sweating, intense thirst, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. This corresponds to Heat in the Stomach channel and is described by the Stomach Heat level within the Four Levels or the Bright-Yang Channel Pattern within the Six Stages.

Heat in Bright Yang – Organ pattern

Fever, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, bleeding gums, dry stools, abdominal pain, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse. This is Dry-Heat in the Intestines level within the Four Levels and is the same as the Bright-Yang Organ Pattern within the Six Stages.

Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Intestines

Low-grade fever, sweating that does not relieve the fever and does not lead to the clearing of Heat, a feeling of fullness of the epigastrium and/or abdomen, epigastric and/or abdominal pain, poor appetite, a sticky taste, a feeling of heaviness of the body, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, burning sensation of the anus, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, headache with a feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion like tangerine

peel, yellow sclera of the eyes, oily sweat, bitter taste, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Heat at Nutritive-Qi level

Fever at night, thirst, dry mouth with no desire to drink, mental restlessness; this is Heat at the Nutritive-Qi level within the Four Levels.

Heat at Blood level

Fever at night, thirst, mental restlessness, macular rash, bleeding; this is Heat in the Blood level within the Four Levels.

Chronic fever

Empty Heat from Yin deficiency

Low-grade fever or feeling of heat in the afternoon or evening, 5-palm heat, malar flush, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, dry mouth and throat at night, mental restlessness, night-sweating, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, dry stools, dark-scanty urination, a thin-red line on the inside of the lower eyelid, Red tongue without coating and with cracks, Fine-Rapid pulse. These are the general symptoms of Empty Heat deriving from Yin deficiency; they may arise from the Lungs, Heart, Stomach, Spleen, Liver, and Kidneys.

Qi Deficiency

Low-grade fever or feeling of heat that is aggravated by overwork, dizziness, tiredness, depression, muscular weakness, spontaneous sweating, shortness of breath, loose stools, poor appetite, weak voice, Pale tongue, Weak or Empty pulse.

Blood deficiency

Low-grade fever or feeling of heat in the afternoon, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat rebelling upwards

Chronic low-grade fever or feeling of heat that comes and goes according to the emotional state (it comes when the person is upset), volatile mood, irritability, a feeling of distension of the chest and hypochondrium, moodiness, a feeling of lump in the throat, pre-menstrual

tension, a bitter taste, tongue red on the sides and thin-yellow coating, Rapid-Wiry pulse.

Blood stasis

Low-grade fever or feeling of heat in the afternoon or evening, abdominal pain, dry skin and nails, dark complexion, purple lips, Purple tongue, Choppy or Firm pulse.

Tidal fever

Tidal fever is a fever that rises and decreases at regular intervals. It is usually only seen in interior patterns.

Yin deficiency

Fever that is higher in the afternoon or only in the afternoon, hot palms and soles, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, dry throat in the evening, scanty-dark urine, dry stools, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Stomach- and Spleen-Qi Deficiency

Fever in the mornings, decreasing in the afternoon, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, uncomfortable sensation of the epigastrium, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse. This pattern is relatively rare and is due to a severe deficiency of Stomach and Spleen Qi occurring after a febrile disease. It was described by Li Dong Yuan in his 'Discussion of Stomach and Spleen' and for which he used the famous prescription *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang* (Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction). This condition is what he called Yin-Fire, which is not Full Heat nor Empty Heat from Yin deficiency, but a kind of Empty Heat from Qi deficiency.

Blood Stasis

Fever in the afternoon or night, dry throat, abdominal pain, dry skin and nails, dark rings under the eyes, Purple tongue, Choppy or Wiry pulse. This is unusual and it is more likely to occur in the elderly; it is often seen in the late stages of cancer due to Blood stasis.

Bright-Yang Organ Pattern

Fever that is higher in the afternoon, sweating of hands and feet, abdominal pain and fullness, constipation, Red tongue and black tongue coating, Deep-Full pulse. This

is the Bright-Yang organ pattern within the Six Stages Identification of Patterns.

Summer-Heat

Fever in the morning, cold feeling at dusk or vice versa, thirst, irritability. This corresponds to invasion of Summer-Heat injuring Qi. This occurs only in children and is relatively rare.

Fever in cancer

Fever in cancer may present with symptoms that are different than the norm and may also be caused by patterns that do not normally cause fever, such as Liver-Qi stagnation and Yang deficiency.

Blood stasis

Fever, cancer characterized by pain and a mass, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse. This may be cancer of the stomach, lungs, intestines, uterus, breast.

Phlegm

Fever in the afternoon, cancer characterized by relatively soft masses, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse. This may be cancer of breast, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease, thyroid cancer.

Damp-Heat

Afternoon fever, fever may be high with delirium, headache, night-sweating, mental restlessness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, oedema, nausea, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse. This may be cancer of the bladder, intestines, prostate or skin.

Toxic-Heat

High fever, shivers, whole body hot to touch, cancer mass growing rapidly, purulent discharges, dark complexion, Red tongue with red points and thick-sticky-dry brown coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse. This may be cancer of oesophagus, lungs, stomach, intestines, breast, uterus.

Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Low-grade afternoon fever, late stage of cancer, 5-palm heat, night-sweating, malar flush, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Heat rebelling upwards

Low-grade afternoon fever, breast cancer, irritability, hypochondrial distension, sighing, Wiry pulse, tongue with Red sides.

Heat in Nutritive-Qi

High fever, delirium, stage of rapid deterioration, mental confusion, maculae, dark-Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

Yang deficiency

Mid-day low-grade fever, late stage of cancer, tiredness, chilliness, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Fever after chemotherapy

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Low-grade fever, no sweating, starts 3 to 5 days after the end of chemotherapy, Purple tongue, Wiry-Slow pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Low-grade fever in the afternoon, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Blood Heat

Low-grade fever, thirst, mouth ulcers, blood in urine, red complexion, Red tongue, Rapid pulse.

3. 5-PALM HEAT

This is a feeling of heat in the palms, soles, and chest, which is also sometimes called Five-Centre Heat or Five-Heart Heat; this may or may not be accompanied by an actual fever. It is usually accompanied by mental restlessness, night-sweating, and insomnia. This is frequently seen in practice; however, it may sometimes only manifest in the soles and palms, or palms and chest.

a) Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Five-palm heat in the afternoon, desire to grasp cold objects, desire to stretch hands and feet out of blankets, dry throat at night, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, malar flush, insomnia, anxiety, dry

mouth with desire to drink in small sips, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse. This can be Yin deficiency of Lungs, Heart, Liver, Kidneys, Stomach or Spleen.

b) Blood deficiency

Five-palm heat in the afternoon which is worse when tense or tired, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse. Blood deficiency, like Yin deficiency, may also cause Empty-Heat and usually only occurs in women, especially after age 40.

c) Liver-Fire

Five-palm heat, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse. Although 5-palm heat is nearly always associated with Yin deficiency, it may also be caused by Liver-Fire, but this is not common.

d) Latent Heat in Lesser Yin

Five-palm heat, low-grade fever, cold in the morning and hot at dusk, mental restlessness, insomnia, Red tongue without coating.



CLINICAL NOTE

Although 5-palm heat involves three areas (the chest, the palms, and the soles), the clinical significance would be the same if only two areas are involved, such as the chest and palms, or the chest and soles, or the palms and soles.

4. CONTRADICTIONARY FEELINGS OF COLD AND HEAT

a) Simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang with prevalence of Kidney-Yin

Dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, malar flush, a feeling of heat in the evening, but possibly also cold feet.

b) Simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang with prevalence of Kidney-Yang

Dizziness, backache, tinnitus, frequent urination, a pronounced feeling of cold, cold feet, but possibly also a feeling of heat in the afternoon.

c) Blood deficiency

Cold hands or feet, feeling cold, blurred vision, dizziness, tingling, dull ache in hands and feet, a feeling of heat in the face.

d) Disharmony of Penetrating Vessel

Cold feet, a feeling of heat in the face, palpitations, anxiety, a feeling of tightness of the chest, a feeling of energy rising from the abdomen, irregular period, painful period, Firm pulse.

e) Co-existence of a Heat and a Cold pattern in different organs

Example:

Kidney-Yang deficiency with Heart-Heat: lower back-ache, feeling of cold in the back, feeling cold, cold feet, frequent-pale urination, dizziness, anxiety, red face, feeling of heat in the face, insomnia, palpitations, Pale tongue but with a Red tip, Deep-Weak pulse.

This is just an example of a co-existence of a Cold and Heat pattern: this situation may arise in connection with many other organs, such as Kidney-Yang deficiency with Liver-Yang rising, Spleen-Yang deficiency with Heart-Heat, Kidney-Yang deficiency with Damp-Heat in the Bladder, Spleen-Yang deficiency with Liver-Fire, Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency with Phlegm-Heat, etc.

f) Lesser-Yang pattern (Six Stages)

Alternations of aversion to cold and fever, bitter taste, dry throat, blurred vision, hypochondrial fullness and distension, no desire to eat or drink, irritability, nausea, vomiting, unilateral thin-white coating, Wiry-Fine pulse.

g) Gall-Bladder Heat (Four Levels)

Alternating hot and cold feeling with a prevalence of heat, bitter taste, thirst, dry throat, hypochondrial pain, nausea, a feeling of fullness in the epigastrium, Red tongue with unilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

In women over age 45, a simultaneous deficiency of Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang is more the rule than the exception.

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Voice, Speech and Sounds

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Loud voice*Heart-Fire**Liver-Fire**Liver-Qi stagnation**Lung-Heat**Lung-Qi stagnation***Weak voice***Empty**Other patterns***Muffled voice***Invasion of Wind**Deficiency of Qi and Blood***Hoarse voice***Full**Empty**Other patterns***Nasal voice***Invasion of Wind-Cold**Invasion of Wind-Dampness**Phlegm in the nasal passages**Dampness in the nasal passages**Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency with Phlegm and/or**Dampness in the nasal passages***Snoring***Full**Full/Empty***Slurred speech***Phlegm**Wind-Phlegm**Heart-Blood deficiency***Incoherent, incessant speech***Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart***Muttering to oneself***Phlegm obstructing the Mind's orifices***Delirious speech***Heat in the Pericardium***Difficulty in finding words***Phlegm**Heart-Blood deficiency**Kidney deficiency***Stuttering***Heart-Blood deficiency**Heart-Fire***Groaning***Dampness**Qi stagnation***Crying out***Blood stasis**Damp-Heat**Toxic-Heat*

The following voice and speech signs and symptoms will be discussed:

1. Loud voice
2. Weak voice
3. Muffled voice
4. Hoarse voice
5. Nasal voice
6. Snoring
7. Slurred speech
8. Incoherent, incessant speech
9. Muttering to oneself
10. Delirious speech
11. Difficulty in finding words
12. Stuttering
13. Groaning
14. Crying out

1. LOUD VOICE

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Heart-Fire

Loud voice, speaking a lot, speech punctuated by frequent bursts of laughter, palpitations, thirst, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver-Fire

Loud voice with a trembling, angry sound, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Liver-Qi stagnation

Loud voice that comes and goes according to the emotional state, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

d) Lung-Heat

Loud voice, cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

e) Lung-Qi stagnation

Trembling, loud voice sounding as if the person is on the brink of tears, sighing, sadness, worry, depression, slight breathlessness, feeling of tightness of the chest.

2. WEAK VOICE

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Empty

Lung-Qi deficiency

Weak voice, dislike of speaking, slight shortness of breath, spontaneous daytime sweating, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-13 Feishu.

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Weak voice, dislike of speaking, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu.

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Weak, slightly groaning voice, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

b) Other patterns

Severe depletion of Qi

Very feeble voice with speech frequently interrupted, great difficulty in starting to speak again after stopping, exhaustion, Pale tongue with teeth marks, Weak-Hidden pulse.

3. MUFFLED VOICE

a) Invasion of Wind

Muffled voice with acute onset, nasal sound, aversion to cold, fever, headache, body aches, Floating pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether it is Wind-Heat or Wind-Cold.

b) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Muffled voice with slow onset, weak voice, poor appetite, loose stools, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

4. HOARSE VOICE

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Full

Lung-Qi stagnation

Hoarse voice that comes and goes according to the emotional state, irritability, depression, worry, feeling

of a lump in the throat, sighing, feeling of oppression of the chest.

Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, LU-3 Tianfu, P-6 Neiguan, ST-40 Fenglong.

b) Empty

Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Hoarse voice with slow onset, dry throat, thirst with a desire to drink in small sips, dry cough that is worse in the evening, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower backache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, LU-9 Taiyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai, Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai).

c) Other patterns

Phlegm and Blood stasis

Hoarse voice in a chronic condition, swelling of the pharynx, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, abdominal pain, mental restlessness, dark complexion, Reddish-Purple and Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

Collapse of Yin or Yang

Hoarse voice with sudden onset in the course of a serious, chronic disease. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Collapse of Yin or Collapse of Yang.

Kidney channel pathology in pregnancy

Hoarse voice towards the end of term; this is due to the Kidney Connecting channel from the Uterus to the throat, and it does not require treatment.

Invasion of Wind-Heat

Hoarse voice with acute onset, sore throat, aversion to cold, fever, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

5. NASAL VOICE

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Invasion of Wind-Cold

Nasal voice with sudden onset, itchy throat, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing, body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

b) Invasion of Wind-Dampness

Nasal voice with sudden onset, aversion to cold, fever, feeling of heaviness of the body, nausea, epigastric pain, vomiting, body aches, tongue with sticky-white coating, Floating-Slippery pulse.

c) Phlegm in the nasal passages

Nasal voice, blocked nose, snoring, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heaviness, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Dampness in the nasal passages

Nasal voice, blocked nose, facial pain, sinusitis, sticky taste, feeling of heaviness, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

e) Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency with Phlegm and/or Dampness in the nasal passages

Nasal voice, blocked nose, runny nose in the morning, chronic sinusitis, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, propensity to catching colds, Pale and Swollen tongue with teeth marks and a sticky coating, Soggy pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

A nasal voice is relatively common in children with residual Dampness in the sinuses.

6. SNORING

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 81](#); Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Full

Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Loud snoring, dry throat, thirst with no desire to drink, barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow sputum,

shortness of breath, wheezing, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heat, thirst, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Soft snoring, feeling of oppression of the chest, cough with expectoration of sticky sputum, feeling of heaviness, sputum in the throat, thirst with no desire to drink, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

Dry Phlegm in the Lungs

High-pitched snoring, dry cough with occasional difficult expectoration of scanty sputum, thirst with no desire to drink, dry mouth and throat, Swollen tongue with sticky-dry coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-1 Zhongfu, LU-7 Lieque, LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, KI-6 Zhaohai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

b) Full/Empty

Phlegm in the Lungs with Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Soft snoring, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heaviness, weak voice, propensity to catching colds, poor appetite, loose stools, tiredness, Pale tongue with teeth marks, Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-1 Zhongfu, LU-7 Lieque, LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, BL-13 Feishu.

7. SLURRED SPEECH

a) Phlegm

Slurred speech, difficulty in finding words, inverting words, feeling of heaviness of the head, dizziness, blurred

vision, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

b) Wind-Phlegm

Slurred speech following a stroke, hemiplegia, severe dizziness, blurred vision, tremors, unilateral numbness of the limbs, tinnitus, nausea, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Stiff or Deviated and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

c) Heart-Blood deficiency

Slurred speech, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

8. INCOHERENT, INCESSANT SPEECH

a) Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart

Incoherent, incessant speech, agitation, mental confusion, palpitations, manic behaviour, mental restlessness, thirst, red face, feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, Red tongue with redder-swollen tip, Heart crack with a sticky-yellow coating inside it, Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

9. MUTTERING TO ONESELF

a) Phlegm obstructing the Mind's orifices

Muttering to oneself, mental confusion, sputum in the throat, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

10. DELIRIOUS SPEECH

a) Heat in the Pericardium

Delirious speech, fever at night, mental confusion, incoherent speech or aphasia, delirium, body hot, hands and feet cold, macules, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse.

11. DIFFICULTY IN FINDING WORDS

a) Phlegm

Difficulty in finding words, inverting words, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, dizziness, blurred vision, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

b) Heart-Blood deficiency

Difficulty in finding words, poor concentration, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Kidney deficiency

Difficulty in finding words, dizziness, tinnitus, poor memory, lower backache. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

12. STUTTERING

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Heart-Blood deficiency

Stuttering, nervous tension, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Heart-Fire

Stuttering, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

13. GROANING

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Dampness

Groaning, acute pain, feeling of heaviness, tongue with thick-sticky coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the location of the Dampness causing pain.

b) Qi stagnation

Groaning, acute pain, and distension, Wiry pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the location of the Qi stagnation causing pain.

14. CRYING OUT

Part 4 Hearing, [Chapter 53](#)

a) Blood stasis

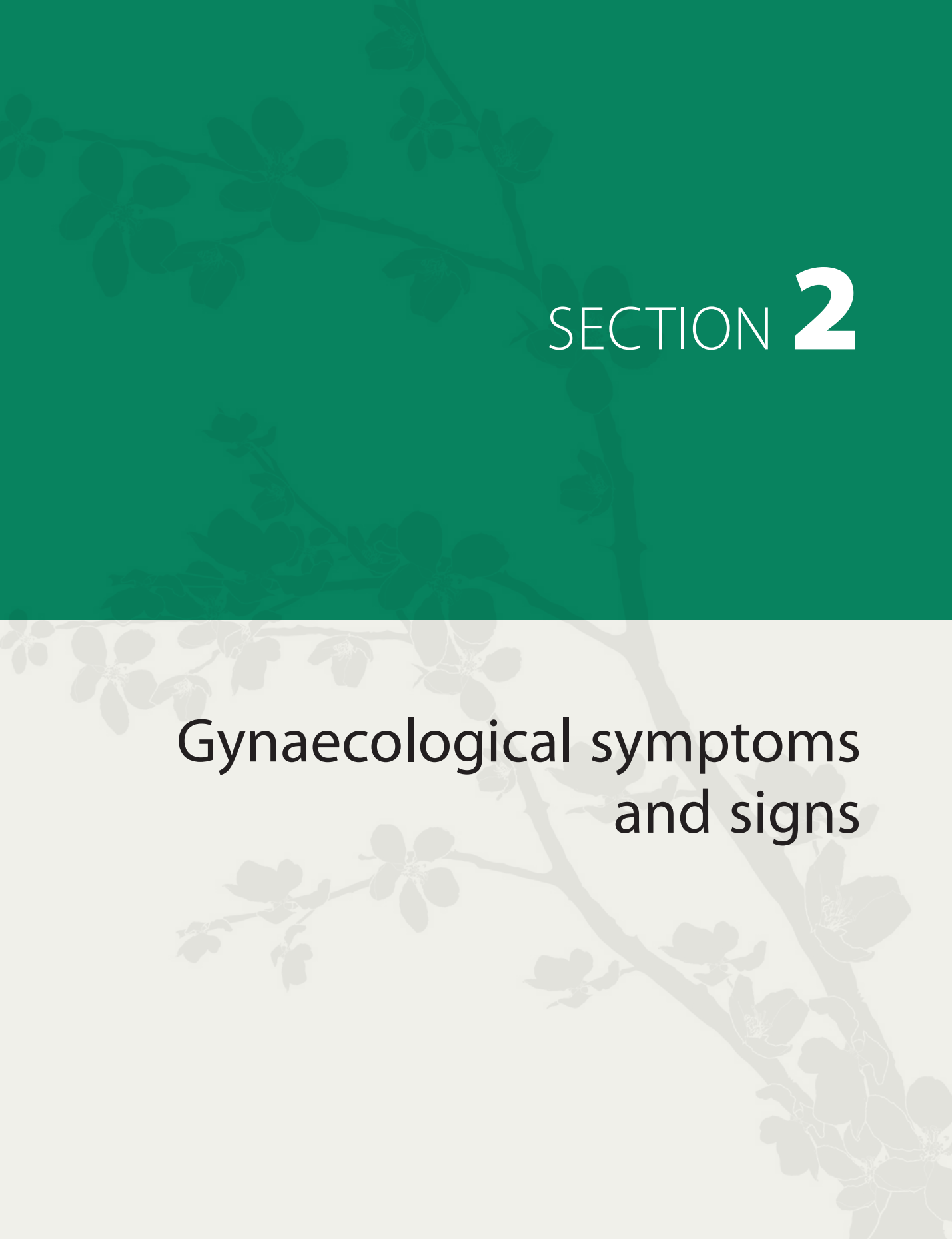
Crying out, severe, acute pain that is stabbing in character, Wiry pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on the location of the Blood stasis causing pain.

b) Damp-Heat

Crying out, severe, acute pain, feeling of fullness and heaviness, thick-sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

c) Toxic-Heat

Crying out, severe, acute pain, feeling of heat, swelling and redness, thick-sticky-dark yellow tongue coating with red spots, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid.



SECTION 2

Gynaecological symptoms and signs

INTRODUCTION

Section 2 of Part 5 lists gynaecological symptoms and signs. These are extremely important, not only in gynaecological conditions, but also to help us reach a diagnosis in women for non-gynaecological conditions.

Questions about menstrual problems or problems arising at period time are very important in every female patient, even after the menopause. This is because, even after the menopause, we need to find out about the menstrual history to build a picture of the constitution of the patient.

To clarify the links between Part 5, on Symptoms and Signs, and Part 1, on Observation, and Part 2, on

Interrogation, I have indicated them in each of these parts (e.g., 'Dizziness', found in [Chapter 55](#) of Part 5, is also found in [Chapter 34](#) of Part 2).

Section 2 of Part 5 is divided into the following chapters:

- [Chapter 84](#): Menstrual symptoms
- [Chapter 85](#): Problems at period time
- [Chapter 86](#): Problems of pregnancy
- [Chapter 87](#): Problems after childbirth
- [Chapter 88](#): Breast signs
- [Chapter 89](#): Miscellaneous gynaecological symptoms

Menstrual Symptoms

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Blood deficiency

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Full

Empty

Other patterns

Heavy periods

Empty

Full

Other patterns

Scanty periods

Blood deficiency

Kidney-Yang deficiency

Kidney-Yin deficiency

Blood stasis in the Uterus

Phlegm obstructing the Uterus

Cold in the Uterus

Painful periods

Full

Other patterns

No periods

Empty

Full

Other patterns

Mid-cycle bleeding

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Damp-Heat

Blood-Stasis

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Periods starting and stopping

Blood stasis in the Uterus

Cold in the Uterus

Liver-Qi stagnation

Periods returning after the menopause

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Liver-Fire

Spleen-Qi deficiency

Toxic Heat in the Uterus

The menstrual symptoms discussed are:

1. Pale menstrual blood
2. Purple menstrual blood
3. Menstrual clots
4. Sticky menstrual blood
5. Watery menstrual blood
6. Early periods (short cycle)
7. Late periods (long cycle)
8. Irregular periods
9. Heavy periods
10. Scanty periods
11. Painful periods

12. No periods
13. Mid-cycle bleeding
14. Periods stopping and starting
15. Periods returning after the menopause

1. PALE MENSTRUAL BLOOD

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Blood deficiency

Pale and dilute menstrual blood, scanty periods, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse.

b) Qi deficiency

Pale menstrual blood, heavy bleeding, shortness of breath, tiredness, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

c) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Pale and dilute menstrual blood, tiredness, loose stools, poor appetite, backache, dizziness, feeling cold, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

d) Damp-Phlegm in the Uterus

Pale and sticky menstrual blood, excessive vaginal discharge, feeling of heaviness, infertility, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

2. PURPLE MENSTRUAL BLOOD

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Qi stagnation and Blood stasis in the Uterus

Purple menstrual blood with dark clots, abdominal distension and pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Blood stasis with Heat in the Uterus

Reddish-purple menstrual blood, purple clots, abdominal pain, mental restlessness, thirst, Reddish-Purple tongue, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Blood stasis with Cold in the Uterus

Bluish-purple menstrual blood, small-dark-stringy clots, abdominal pain, feeling cold, painful periods alleviated by the application of heat, Bluish-Purple tongue, Wiry-Tight-Slow pulse.

d) Blood deficiency with Cold in the Uterus

Pale-purplish menstrual blood, scanty periods, painful periods alleviated by the application of heat, feeling cold, dizziness, blurred vision, Pale tongue with white coating, Choppy pulse.

3. MENSTRUAL CLOTS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Full

Blood stasis in the Uterus (and Liver)

Dark menstrual blood with dark large clots, painful periods relieved by the passage of clots, periods starting with a brownish discharge, periods stopping and starting, painful periods, irregular periods, infertility, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

Chong Mai (SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan), LIV-3 Taichong, KI-14 Siman, SP-10 Xuehai.

Cold in the Uterus

Small-stringy clots with bright-red blood, painful periods alleviated by the application of heat, feeling cold during the periods, dilute menstrual blood, Pale tongue, Deep-Tight pulse.

Acupuncture

Chong Mai (SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan), LIV-3 Taichong, KI-14 Siman, SP-10 Xuehai, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-3 Zhongji, Ren-6 Qihai. Moxa.

b) Other patterns

Blood Heat

Dark but fresh-looking clots, heavy periods, feeling of heat, red face, Red tongue, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Qi deficiency

Small, pale-red, fresh-looking clots, heavy period with bright-red and dilute blood, pale face, tiredness, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

4. STICKY MENSTRUAL BLOOD

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Damp-Heat in the Uterus

Sticky menstrual blood with offensive odour, excessive vaginal discharge, hypogastric fullness, vaginal itching, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Phlegm in the Uterus

Sticky menstrual blood with pale colour, feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, nausea, excessive vaginal discharge, infertility, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

c) Liver and Heart-Fire

Sticky menstrual blood, early periods, heavy periods, mental restlessness, insomnia, thirst, red face, palpitations, headaches, bitter taste, burning on urination, Red tongue with redder sides and tip and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

d) Blood stasis in the Uterus with Heat

Sticky menstrual blood, dark clots, feeling of heat, abdominal pain, painful periods, Reddish-Purple tongue, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

5. WATERY MENSTRUAL BLOOD

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Qi deficiency

Watery-pale menstrual blood, heavy period, tiredness, pale face, shortness of breath, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Blood deficiency

Watery menstrual blood, scanty periods, late periods, blurred vision, dull-pale face, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

c) Cold-Dampness in the Uterus

Watery menstrual blood, feeling of heaviness and cold in the hypogastrium, painful periods alleviated by the application of heat, late periods, abdominal pain, excessive vaginal discharge, sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow or Tight-Slow pulse.

d) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Watery-pale menstrual blood, heavy periods, tiredness, feeling cold, backache, loose stools, dizziness, Pale and Swollen tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

e) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Watery menstrual blood that is scarlet red, late periods, scanty periods, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

6. EARLY PERIODS (SHORT CYCLE)

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Qi deficiency

Early periods, heavy bleeding, pale blood, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Blood Heat

Early period, heavy bleeding, bright-red or dark-red blood, feeling of heat, thirst, mental restlessness, red face, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

c) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Early periods, scanty periods, dizziness, tinnitus, backache, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Blood stasis in the Uterus

Early periods, painful periods with dark blood and clots, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

7. LATE PERIODS (LONG CYCLE)

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Blood deficiency

Late period, scanty periods, blurred vision, dizziness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Cold in the Uterus

Late periods, scanty bleeding, painful periods alleviated by the application of heat, small-dark-stringy clots, feeling cold, Pale tongue, Deep-Tight-Slow pulse.

c) Damp-Phlegm in the Uterus

Late periods, sticky menstrual blood, feeling of heaviness, excessive vaginal discharge, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Kidney deficiency

Late periods, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, tongue without coating. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a deficiency of Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang.

8. IRREGULAR PERIODS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

‘Irregular periods’ indicates periods that come sometimes early and sometimes late. It is important to bear in mind that many women refer to ‘irregular periods’ when the periods are either consistently late or consistently early, in which case they fall under the headings of ‘late periods’ or ‘early periods’ respectively.

a) Full

Liver-Qi stagnation

Irregular periods, pre-menstrual tension, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai).

b) Empty

Kidney deficiency

Irregular periods, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, infertility. Other manifestations, including the pulse and tongue, depend on whether there is Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Acupuncture

Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai), KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Qixue.

c) Other patterns

Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency

Irregular periods, scanty bleeding, pale blood, palpitations, tiredness, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

9. HEAVY PERIODS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

‘Heavy Periods’ indicates heavy menstrual blood that occurs at the proper time; that is, the period comes regularly, it lasts approximately 4 or 5 days, and the bleeding is heavy during that time. There is another condition characterised by heavy bleeding called ‘Flooding and Trickling’ (*Beng Lou*): this indicates heavy menstrual blood outside the proper time; specifically, the period may come early with a sudden flood (*Beng*) and/or it may continue with a trickle after the proper period time (*Lou*). The various pathological conditions indicated below apply to both ‘Heavy Periods’ and ‘Flooding and Trickling’.

a) Empty

Qi deficiency

Heavy menstrual bleeding that may come early with a flood, pale blood, tiredness, pale face, poor appetite, palpitations, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai), Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, KI-13 Qixue, Du-20 Baihui.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Heavy menstrual bleeding, pale blood, irregular periods, backache, feeling cold, loose stools, tiredness, infertility, Pale and Swollen tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai), Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, KI-13 Qixue, Du-20 Baihui, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Heavy menstrual bleeding, trickling after the proper time, irregular periods, infertility, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Du-20 Baihui, Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai).

b) Full

Blood Heat

Heavy menstrual bleeding, bright-red or dark-red blood, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, red face, thirst, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai), LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, KI-2 Rangu, SP-10 Xuehai.

c) Other patterns

Liver-Fire

Heavy menstrual bleeding, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face,

thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Blood Empty Heat

Heavy menstrual bleeding, irregular periods, trickling after the proper time, infertility, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, feeling of heat in the evening, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

Blood stasis in the Uterus

Heavy menstrual bleeding, painful periods with dark blood and dark clots, periods that stop and start, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Table 84.1 summarizes the pathology of heavy periods.



CLINICAL NOTE

In my opinion, most practitioners tend to have a bias towards Qi deficiency as a cause of heavy menstrual bleeding. In my experience, roughly half the cases are due to Blood Heat.



CLINICAL NOTE

It may seem strange that Blood stasis may cause excessive menstrual bleeding. It happens because stagnant Blood obstructs the blood vessels in the uterus, which prevents new Blood from occupying its place so that it leaks out.

10. SCANTY PERIODS

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 46

a) Blood deficiency

Scanty periods with pale-dilute blood, late periods, dizziness, blurred vision, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Scanty periods with pale blood, late periods, infertility, irregular periods, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling

Table 84.1 Pathology and patterns of heavy periods

Symptoms	Tongue	Pattern
Heavy menstrual bleeding that may come early with a flood, pale blood	Pale	Qi deficiency
Heavy menstrual bleeding, pale blood, irregular periods, backache, feeling cold, loose stools	Pale, wet	Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency
Heavy menstrual bleeding, trickling after the proper time, irregular periods, infertility, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating	Without coating	Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency
Heavy menstrual bleeding, bright-red or dark-red blood, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, red face, thirst	Red with coating	Blood Heat
Heavy menstrual bleeding, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability	Red with redder sides, yellow coating	Liver-Fire
Heavy menstrual bleeding, irregular periods, trickling after the proper time, infertility, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, feeling of heat in the evening, 5-palm heat	Red without coating	Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Blood Empty Heat
Heavy menstrual bleeding, painful periods with dark blood and dark clots, periods that start and stop	Purple sides	Blood stasis

cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Scanty periods, irregular periods, late periods, infertility, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth and drinking in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Blood stasis in the Uterus

Scanty periods with dark blood and clots, painful periods, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

e) Phlegm obstructing the Uterus

Scanty periods with a brownish discharge, excessive vaginal discharge, feeling of heaviness, obesity, Swollen tongue, Slippery pulse.

f) Cold in the Uterus

Scanty periods, late periods, painful periods alleviated by the application of heat, feeling cold, abdominal pain, white tongue coating, Tight-Slow pulse.

11. PAINFUL PERIODS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Full

Liver-Qi stagnation

Abdominal distension and pain before or during the periods, pre-menstrual tension, distension of breasts, no clots, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-6 Qihai.

Liver-Blood stasis

Severe period pain that is alleviated by the passage of clots, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

Chong Mai (SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan), LIV-3 Taichong, KI-14 Siman, SP-10 Xuehai, Ren-6 Qihai.

Stagnation of Cold in the Uterus

Severe, spastic, cramp-like menstrual pain that is alleviated by the application of heat, small-stringy clots on

Table 84.2 Pathology and patterns of painful periods

Symptoms	Tongue	Pattern
Abdominal distension and pain before or during periods	Normal or slightly red sides	Liver-Qi stagnation
Severe period pain that is alleviated by the passage of clots	Purple sides	Liver-Blood stasis
Severe spastic, cramp-like menstrual pain that is alleviated by the application of heat, small-stringy clots on bright red blood, feeling cold during the period	Pale	Stagnation of Cold
Painful periods with a feeling of heaviness extending to the sacrum, mid-cycle pain, small-red clots	Red with sticky-yellow coating	Damp-Heat
Painful periods, heavy periods, irritability, thirst, bitter taste	Red sides	Stagnant Liver-Qi turning to Liver-Fire
Dull menstrual pain towards the end of or after the period, pain relieved by pressure, scanty periods	Pale	Deficiency of Qi and Blood
Dull period pain during or after the period, scanty bleeding, no clots	Pale and slightly swollen on the sides	Spleen-Yang and Liver-Blood deficiency
Dull period pain during or after the period, scanty period, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating	No coating	Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

bright red blood, feeling cold during the period, Pale tongue, Deep-Tight pulse.

Acupuncture

Chong Mai (SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan), LIV-3 Taichong, KI-14 Siman, SP-10 Xuehai, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-4 Guanyuan. Moxa.

b) Other patterns

Damp-Heat in the Uterus

Painful periods with a feeling of heaviness extending to the sacrum, mid-cycle pain, small-red clots, excessive vaginal discharge, dark urine, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Stagnant Liver-Qi turning to Liver-Fire

Painful periods, heavy periods, irritability, thirst, bitter taste, dry stools, Red tongue with redder sides and yellow coating, Rapid-Wiry pulse.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Dull menstrual pain towards the end of or after the period, pain relieved by pressure, scanty periods, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Spleen-Yang and Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull period pain during or after the period, scanty bleeding, no clots, dull headache, blurred vision, tiredness, loose stools, Pale and Swollen tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dull period pain during or after the period, scanty period, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Table 84.2 summarizes the pathology of painful periods.

12. NO PERIODS

Part 2 Interrogation, Chapter 46

a) Empty

Blood deficiency

Menstruation stops after several months of decreasing periods; blurred vision, dizziness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Liver and Kidney deficiency

Menstruation has not started by the age of 18, nor stops after becoming scanty; backache, dizziness, tiredness. Other manifestations, including pulse and tongue, depend on whether there is Kidney-Yin or Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-13 Qixue.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

No periods, tiredness, loose stools, backache, dizziness, feeling cold, Pale and swollen tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen. Moxa.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

No periods, dizziness, tinnitus, backache, blurred vision, dry eyes, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse. This is usually secondary amenorrhoea in older women.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-13 Qixue.

b) Full**Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood**

Periods stop suddenly, irritability, abdominal distension and pain, depression, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

Chong Mai (SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan), LIV-3 Taichong, KI-14 Siman, SP-10 Xuehai, Ren-6 Qihai.

Damp-Phlegm in the Uterus

Periods stop after gradually decreasing in amount, obesity, excessive vaginal discharge, feeling of heaviness,

abdominal fullness, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai), ST-40 Fenglong, ST-28 Shuidao, Ren-5 Shimen, SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-22 Sanyinjiao, Ren-9 Shuifen.

c) Other patterns**Lung-Yin and Blood deficiency**

No periods, dry cough, shortness of breath, malar flush, depression, sighing, dizziness, sadness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

No periods, palpitations, insomnia, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, depression, anxiety, night-sweating, Red tongue with redder tip and without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency

No periods, palpitations, depression, insomnia, pale-dull complexion, tiredness, loose stools, poor appetite, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Periods stop suddenly, irritability, abdominal distension and pain, depression, Wiry pulse.

Damp-Phlegm in the Uterus

Periods stop after gradually decreasing in amount, obesity, excessive vaginal discharge, feeling of heaviness, abdominal fullness, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

13. MID-CYCLE BLEEDING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Mid-cycle bleeding that is scanty, scarlet-red blood, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, backache, 5-palm heat, malar flush, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Damp-Heat

Mid-cycle bleeding that may be heavy or scanty, sticky blood, fatigue, ache in the joints, feeling of heaviness, poor appetite, vaginal discharge, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Blood-Stasis

Mid-cycle bleeding with pain, scanty blood, dark blood with dark clots, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Mid-cycle bleeding that may be profuse, bright-red-dilute blood, dizziness, tinnitus, backache, loose stools, tiredness, depression, feeling cold, frequent urination, Pale and Swollen tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

14. PERIODS STARTING AND STOPPING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Blood stasis in the Uterus

Periods stopping and starting, painful periods with dark blood and clots, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Cold in the Uterus

Periods stopping and starting, painful periods with small-dark-stringy clots, scanty periods, abdominal pain alleviated by the application of heat, white tongue coating, Deep-Tight pulse.

c) Liver-Qi stagnation

Periods stopping and starting, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

15. PERIODS RETURNING AFTER THE MENOPAUSE

This symptom occurs only in menopausal women, when the periods stop for at least a year and then suddenly

return; in ancient times it was called 'inverted opening flower'.

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Periods returning suddenly after 1 year of climacterium, scanty in volume, fresh red blood, malar flush, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, insomnia, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Stagnant Liver-Qi turned into Liver-Fire

Periods returning suddenly after 1 year of climacterium, heavy period, dark-red blood, red clots, propensity to outbursts of anger, thirst, bitter taste, insomnia, Red tongue with redder sides and yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

c) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Periods returning suddenly after 1 year of climacterium, heavy period, bright-red-dilute blood, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

d) Toxic Heat in the Uterus

Periods returning suddenly after 1 year of climacterium, bloody-vaginal discharge with offensive odour, five-colour vaginal discharge, foul breath, constipation, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating and red spots, Rapid-Overflowing pulse. This condition may correspond to carcinoma of the uterus in Western medicine; therefore a bloody vaginal discharge with offensive odour in a woman after the menopause always requires a gynaecological examination.

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Problems at Period Time

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Pre-menstrual tension*Full**Empty/Full**Other patterns***Headache***Liver-Blood deficiency**Liver-Yang rising**Liver-Fire**Blood stasis***Breast distension***Liver-Qi stagnation**Liver-Blood stasis**Phlegm with stagnation of Qi**Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Liver-Qi stagnation**Stagnant Liver-Qi turning to Liver-Fire**Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency with Liver-Qi stagnation**Liver-Blood and Kidney-Yang deficiency**Lung-Qi stagnation**Phlegm with Lung-Qi stagnation***Fever***Blood Heat**Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Qi and Blood deficiency with disharmony of Nutritive and Defensive Qi**Blood stasis in the Uterus***Body aches***Blood deficiency**Blood stasis***Oedema***Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency**Qi Stagnation***Diarrhoea***Spleen-Qi deficiency**Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen**Kidney-Yang deficiency***Constipation***Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Intestines**Liver-Blood deficiency**Kidney-Yang deficiency***Nose bleed***Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Fire**Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Stomach-Fire**Spleen-Qi deficiency***Mouth ulcers***Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat**Stomach-Fire**Stomach Damp-Heat with Spleen-Qi deficiency***Skin eruptions***Blood deficiency**Wind-Heat invading Blood***Dizziness***Blood deficiency**Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency with Liver-Yang rising**Phlegm with Spleen-Qi deficiency***Vomiting***Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Stomach**Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency**Phlegm with Spleen-Qi deficiency***Insomnia***Liver-Yang rising**Liver- and Heart-Fire**Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency***Eye pain***Liver-Blood deficiency**Liver-Blood deficiency giving rise to Internal Wind**Liver-Fire**Liver-Blood stasis*

The problems at period time discussed are:

1. Pre-menstrual tension
2. Headache
3. Breast distension
4. Fever
5. Body aches
6. Oedema
7. Diarrhoea

8. Constipation
9. Nose bleed
10. Mouth ulcers
11. Skin eruptions
12. Dizziness
13. Vomiting
14. Insomnia
15. Eye pain

1. PRE-MENSTRUAL TENSION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Full

Liver-Qi stagnation

Irritability, depression, moodiness, propensity to outbursts of anger, impatience, irregular periods, breast distension, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, feeling of a lump in the throat, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, HE-7 Shenmen, Du-24 Shenting, G.B.-13 Benshen.

Liver- and Heart-Fire

Propensity to outbursts of anger, irritability, mental restlessness, shouting, anxiety, insomnia, breast distension, heavy periods, feeling of heat, headache, red face, dizziness, tinnitus, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, palpitations, mouth and tongue ulcers, Red tongue with redder sides and tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, HE-7 Shenmen, Du-24 Shenting, G.B.-13 Benshen.

Heart-Fire

Mental restlessness, anxiety, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, breast distension, heavy periods, palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

HE-8 Shaofu, L.I.-11 Quchi, HE-7 Shenmen, Du-24 Shenting.

b) Empty/Full

Liver-Blood deficiency with secondary Liver-Qi stagnation

Weepiness, crying, depression, mild irritability, mild breast distension, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Du-24 Shenting, G.B.-13 Benshen.

Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Weepiness, crying, depression, lack of motivation, insomnia, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dizziness, tinnitus, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical headache, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat in the evening, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Du-24 Shenting.

Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Weepiness, crying, depression, lack of motivation, tiredness, lassitude, scanty or heavy periods, lower backache, sensation of cold in the back, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, apathy, oedema of the lower legs, loose stools, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen, Du-24 Shenting. Moxa.

c) Other patterns

Phlegm-Fire harassing upwards

Mental restlessness, anxiety, insomnia, hyperactivity, dream-disturbed sleep, mental confusion, breast

distension, swelling and pain, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, feeling of heat, red face, greasy skin, feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, expectoration of yellow sputum, dizziness, nausea, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness and secondary Liver-Qi stagnation

Weepiness, depression, tiredness, lassitude, feeling of heaviness, swelling of the breasts, mild irritability, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, pale complexion, weak limbs, loose stools, abdominal fullness, sticky taste, nausea, excessive vaginal discharge, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Soggy pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: Pre-menstrual tension is not always due to a Liver disharmony. For example, Heart-Fire can cause it.

2. HEADACHE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull vertical headache during or after the period, scanty period, dizziness, blurred vision, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Yang rising

Throbbing headache on the temples before or during the period, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, Wiry pulse.

c) Liver-Fire

Throbbing headache on the temples or eyes during the period, blood-shot eyes, red face, thirst, bitter taste, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue

with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

d) Blood stasis

Stabbing headache on the temples during the period, painful periods with dark blood and clots, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

3. BREAST DISTENSION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Liver-Qi stagnation

Pre-menstrual breast distension, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

b) Liver-Blood stasis

Pre-menstrual breast distension and pain, painful period with dark blood and clots, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Phlegm with stagnation of Qi

Pre-menstrual breast distension, breast nodularity, swollen and painful breasts, feeling of oppression of the chest, sighing, obesity, Swollen tongue, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

d) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Liver-Qi stagnation

Slight pre-menstrual breast distension, scanty periods, dizziness, tinnitus, irregular periods, tongue without coating, Fine and slightly Wiry pulse.

e) Stagnant Liver-Qi turning to Liver-Fire

Pre-menstrual breast distension and pain, abdominal distension, bitter taste, thirst, insomnia, irritability, Red tongue with redder sides and yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

f) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency with Liver-Qi stagnation

Slight pre-menstrual breast distension, late periods, irregular periods, infertility, backache, dizziness, tiredness, loose stools, Pale and Swollen tongue, Weak pulse.

g) Liver-Blood and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Slight breast distension before or during the period, irregular periods, dizziness, tinnitus, blurred vision, backache, pale face, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

h) Lung-Qi stagnation

Pre-menstrual breast distension, feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, sadness, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest areas, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

i) Phlegm with Lung-Qi stagnation

Phlegm in the throat, feeling of a lump in the throat, feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, difficulty in swallowing, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, sputum in the throat, tongue slightly Swollen on the sides in the chest areas, Slippery pulse that is also very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: Pre-menstrual breast distension is not always due to a Liver disharmony. Stagnation of Lung-Qi (with or without Phlegm) also affects the breasts.

4. FEVER

a) Blood Heat

Fever before or during the period, heavy period, mental restlessness, thirst, hot nose, red lips, Red tongue, Rapid-Overflowing pulse.

b) Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Low-grade fever during the period, 5-palm heat, night-sweating, mental restlessness, dizziness, tinnitus, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Qi and Blood deficiency with disharmony of Nutritive and Defensive Qi

Low-grade fever during or after the period, pale complexion, dizziness, tiredness, Pale-Thin tongue, Fine-Rapid pulse.

d) Blood stasis in the Uterus

Fever during the period that is worse in the evening, painful periods, dark blood with clots, Purple tongue, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

5. BODY ACHES

a) Blood deficiency

Aches during or after the period, mostly in the limbs, numbness, tingling of the limbs, tiredness, dizziness, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

b) Blood stasis

Severe aches during or before the period, painful periods with dark blood and clots, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

6. OEDEMA

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Oedema during or after the period especially of the ankles, backache, tiredness, loose stools, heavy periods, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Qi Stagnation

Non-pitting oedema during or before the periods, abdominal and breast distension, pre-menstrual tension, irritability, Wiry pulse.

7. DIARRHOEA

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Diarrhoea during or after the period, slight abdominal distension, poor appetite, tiredness, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Spleen

Diarrhoea before the period, alternating constipation and diarrhoea, pre-menstrual tension, breast distension, irritability, Wiry pulse.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Diarrhoea after the period, irregular periods, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

8. CONSTIPATION

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Intestines

Constipation with bitty stools, abdominal distension, pre-menstrual irritability, irregular periods, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, feeling of a lump in the throat, Wiry pulse.

b) Liver-Blood deficiency

Constipation with dry stools, pre-menstrual weepiness and depression, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters,

numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Constipation with infrequent bowel movements, lower backache, cold knees, sensation of cold in the lower back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, weak knees, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, oedema of the lower legs, depression, decreased libido, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

9. NOSE BLEED

a) Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Fire

Nose bleed before or during the period, heavy bleeding, abdominal distension, bitter taste, thirst, irritability, headache, Red tongue with redder sides and yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Nose bleed during or after the period, dry cough, scanty period, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach-Fire

Nose bleed during the period, bleeding gums, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

d) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Nose bleed during the period, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

10. MOUTH ULCERS

a) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Mouth or tongue ulcers during the period, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

b) Stomach-Fire

Mouth ulcers during the period, bleeding gums, burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with a desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, dry stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, feeling of heat, tongue Red with a thick-dry-dark yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse.

c) Stomach Damp-Heat with Spleen-Qi deficiency

Mouth ulcers, cold sores around the lips, abdominal distension, loose stools, thirst with no desire to drink, sticky taste, poor appetite, Pale tongue but with a sticky-yellow coating in

11. SKIN ERUPTIONS

a) Blood deficiency

Itchy papular skin eruptions during or after the period, insomnia, dizziness, scanty periods, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

b) Wind-Heat invading Blood

Itchy skin eruptions during or before the period, irritability, dry mouth, Red tongue with red points, Rapid pulse.

12. DIZZINESS

a) Blood deficiency

Dizziness during or after the period, blurred vision, scanty periods, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

b) Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency with Liver-Yang rising

Severe dizziness during or before the period, tinnitus, scanty periods, insomnia, dizziness, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Phlegm with Spleen-Qi deficiency

Severe dizziness during or before the period, feeling of heaviness and muzziness of the head, excessive vaginal discharge, swelling of the breasts before the period, Pale and Swollen tongue, Slippery and slightly Weak pulse.

13. VOMITING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Vomiting before or during the period, belching, epigastric distension and pain, irritability, Wiry pulse.

b) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Vomiting of thin fluids or nausea during or after the periods, dull epigastric pain, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

c) Phlegm with Spleen-Qi deficiency

Vomiting during the periods, nausea, feeling of oppression of the chest, tiredness, loose stools, poor appetite, Pale and Swollen tongue, Slippery and slightly Weak pulse.

14. INSOMNIA

a) Liver-Yang rising

Insomnia before the periods, anxiety, dizziness, headache, dry throat, irregular periods. Other symptoms and signs, including pulse and tongue, depend on the condition underlying Liver-Yang rising, which may be Liver-Blood deficiency, Liver-Yin deficiency, or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

b) Liver- and Heart-Fire

Insomnia during the period, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, anxiety, bitter taste, thirst, palpitations, blood-shot eyes, propensity to outburst of anger, dizziness, headache, epistaxis, heavy periods, red face, Red tongue with redder sides and yellow coating, Wiry and Rapid pulse.

c) Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency

Insomnia during or after the period, slight anxiety, depression, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, poor appetite, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

15. EYE PAIN**a) Liver-Blood deficiency**

Dull eye pain at period time, dull headache, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Blood deficiency giving rise to Internal Wind

Eye pain at period time, facial tic, giddiness, vertigo, headache, sallow complexion, blurred vision, floaters, Pale-Thin tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Liver-Fire

Eye pain at period time, blood-shot eyes, pre-menstrual tension, heavy periods, red face, thirst, bitter taste, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

d) Liver-Blood stasis

Stabbing eye pain at period time, painful periods with dark clotted blood, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

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The problems of pregnancy discussed are:

1. Morning sickness
2. Vaginal bleeding
3. Abdominal pain
4. Threatened miscarriage
5. Oedema
6. Painful urination
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16. Foetus not growing
17. Breech presentation
18. Habitual miscarriage

1. MORNING SICKNESS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Empty

Stomach-Qi deficiency

Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, Ren-13 Shangwan and ST-36 Zusanli.

Stomach-Qi deficiency with Empty Cold

Slight morning sickness, no vomiting or vomiting of dilute fluids, tiredness, feeling cold, poor appetite, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, Ren-13 Shangwan and ST-36 Zusanli.
Moxa.

Stomach-Yin deficiency

Morning sickness, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, poor appetite, tongue without coating in the centre.

Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, Ren-13 Shangwan and ST-36 Zusanli,
Ren-12 Zhongwan.

b) Full

Stagnant liver-Qi invading the Stomach

Morning sickness, retching, belching, vomiting of food with sour taste, epigastric distension, irritability, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, Ren-12 Zongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-13 Shangwan, P-6 Neiguan.

Stomach-Heat

Severe morning sickness that may persist beyond the first 3 months, vomiting of food soon after eating, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, excessive hunger, foul breath, feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-13 Shangwan and ST-36 Zusanli.

c) Other patterns

Accumulation of Phlegm

Morning sickness, profuse vomiting, occasional vomiting of clear fluids with mucus, feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, dizziness, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

Heart-Qi deficiency

Slight morning sickness, palpitations, anxiety, depression, Pale tongue, Empty pulse on the Left-Front position.

Heart-Fire

Morning sickness that may persist beyond the first 3 months, palpitations, thirst, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.



CLINICAL NOTE

Simple, straightforward cases of morning sickness react well to P-6 Neiguan, Ren-13 Shangwan and ST-36 Zusanli. If they do not react to this treatment, it often indicates that there is a pre-existing, underlying Stomach pathology.

2. VAGINAL BLEEDING DURING PREGNANCY

a) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Vaginal bleeding early in the pregnancy, scanty-fresh red blood, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Liver-Blood deficiency

Vaginal bleeding early in the pregnancy, scanty-pale blood, dull-pale complexion, blurred vision, palpitation, insomnia, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

c) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Vaginal bleeding during the first 3 months, scanty-fresh blood, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

d) Blood-Heat

Vaginal bleeding that may occur beyond the first 3 months, bright-red or dark-red blood, red face, anxiety, insomnia, dark urine, Red tongue with yellow coating, Rapid-Overflowing pulse.

e) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Vaginal bleeding during pregnancy, scanty blood, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

f) Trauma

Vaginal bleeding after a fall or trauma, backache.

3. ABDOMINAL PAIN DURING PREGNANCY

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Mild abdominal pain that comes and goes, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, blurred vision, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Qi stagnation

Abdominal pain and distension, hypochondrial pain and distension, irritability, Wiry pulse.

c) Empty-Cold in the uterus

Dull abdominal pain that improves with the application of heat and by drinking warm liquids, feeling of cold, white complexion, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

4. THREATENED MISCARRIAGE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Empty

Kidney deficiency

Threatened miscarriage early in the pregnancy, backache, scanty-vaginal bleeding, dizziness, exhaustion. Other symptoms, including pulse and tongue, depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, KI-9 Zhubin, BL-23 Shenshu.

b) Other patterns

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Threatened miscarriage towards the end of or beyond the first 3 months, backache, scanty vaginal bleeding, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Blood-Heat

Threatened miscarriage early in the pregnancy, backache, scanty vaginal bleeding, feeling of heat, thirst, anxiety, insomnia, Red tongue with yellow coating, Rapid pulse.

Liver-Qi stagnation

Threatened miscarriage in the first 3 months, backache, scanty vaginal bleeding, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

Falls, trauma

Threatened miscarriage following a fall or a trauma, backache, abdominal pain, scanty vaginal bleeding, tongue and pulse normal.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: Threatened miscarriage can be due to causes within the mother or causes within the foetus. If within the foetus, treatment is unlikely to help; if within the mother, it can help.

5. OEDEMA

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

In some cases, oedema during pregnancy may be the first symptom heralding a pre-eclampsia state.

a) Spleen-Yang deficiency

Oedema early in the pregnancy, swelling of the face or whole body, yellowish and shiny skin, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, bright-white complexion, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Oedema early in the pregnancy, worse in the ankles, cold legs, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Qi stagnation

Oedema beginning towards the fourth month of pregnancy, starting in the feet, not pitting, abdominal distension, irritability, Wiry pulse.

6. PAINFUL URINATION

a) Heart-Fire

Burning on urination, scanty-dark urine, palpitations, thirst, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Burning on urination, difficult urination, slight retention, turbid urine, thirst with no desire to drink, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Slight burning on urination, scanty-dark urine, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Slight pain after urination, pale urine, slight incontinence of urine, pale face, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

7. RETENTION OF URINE

a) Spleen-Qi deficient and sinking

Scanty but frequent urination, feeling of bearing down, loose stools, pale complexion, tiredness, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

b) Kidney-Qi deficient and sinking

Scanty but frequent urination, pale urine, flow of micturition interrupted, uncomfortable sensation in the hypogastrium that is worse when sitting, feeling cold, backache, dizziness, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Difficult urination, dark urine, turbid urine, feeling of heaviness in the lower abdomen, sticky taste, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Liver-Qi stagnation

Urinary difficulty in the seventh or eighth month, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

8. BLOOD IN THE URINE

a) Heart-Fire

Blood in the urine during pregnancy, dark urine, palpitations, thirst, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Blood in the urine during pregnancy, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Blood in the urine in pregnancy, blurred vision, dry eyes, dizziness, night-sweating, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse that is slightly Wiry on the left.

9. CONSTIPATION

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Constipation, difficult defecation, dry stools, pale complexion, dizziness, blurred vision, tiredness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Constipation, difficulty in defecation, stools not dry, exhaustion after defecation, backache, dizziness, tinnitus,

feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Constipation, dry stools, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

c) Liver-Qi stagnation

Constipation, bitty stools, desire to open the bowels but difficulty in doing so, belching, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

10. ANXIETY

a) Liver-Fire

Severe anxiety, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

b) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Anxiety, worse in the evening, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, malar flush, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

c) Phlegm-Fire harassing the Mind

Anxiety, mental restlessness, agitation, mental confusion, phobias, irritability, feeling of oppression of the chest, dizziness, nausea, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

d) Heart-Fire

Severe anxiety, palpitations, thirst, agitation, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, bitter

taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

e) Liver-Qi stagnation

Anxiety, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

11. DIZZINESS

a) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Liver-Yang rising

Severe dizziness towards the latter stages of pregnancy, tinnitus, insomnia, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Spleen deficiency with Liver-Yang rising and Phlegm

Dizziness with early onset during the pregnancy, swelling of fingers and ankles, tiredness, feeling of oppression of the chest, blurred vision, tingling of the limbs, insomnia, Pale tongue, Choppy pulse if Liver-Blood deficiency predominates; Slippery and slightly Weak pulse if Phlegm predominates.

c) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Slight dizziness in pregnancy, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

12. COUGH

a) Lung-Yin deficiency

Dry cough that starts during the second trimester and is worse in the evenings, dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with a desire to drink in small sips, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Cough with expectoration of profuse yellow sputum, feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling of heat, mental

restlessness, Red and Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Cough with expectoration of profuse white sputum, feeling of oppression of the chest, cold limbs, feeling of heaviness, sticky taste, Swollen tongue with sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

13. LOSS OF VOICE

a) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Loss of voice or hoarseness of voice towards the end of pregnancy, dry throat, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

b) Phlegm-Heat

Loss of voice or hoarseness of voice, dry cough with occasional expectoration of scanty phlegm, feeling of oppression of the chest, sticky taste, mental restlessness, Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

c) Lung-Yin deficiency

Loss of voice or hoarseness of the voice preceded by a weakening of the voice; dry cough, weak voice, dry throat with a desire to drink in small sips, hoarse voice, night-sweating, tiredness, tongue without coating in the front, Floating-Empty pulse.

14. FEELING OF SUFFOCATION

a) Qi stagnation with disharmony of the Liver and Spleen

Feeling of suffocation and anxiety, feeling of tightness of the chest, irritability, insomnia, inability to lie down, feeling of energy rising from the lower abdomen towards the chest and throat, feeling of breathlessness, Pale tongue with slightly red sides, pulse that is Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

b) Qi stagnation with deficiency of Blood and Kidneys

Feeling of suffocation and anxiety, feeling of tightness of the chest, mental restlessness, insomnia, inability to lie down, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, backache, frequent urination, Pale tongue, pulse that is Weak in general, especially on both the Rear positions, and slightly Wiry on the left.

15. CONVULSIONS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Liver-Wind agitating within

Tremor of the limbs, hypertension late in the pregnancy, headache, malar flush, feeling of heat in the afternoon, convulsions, unconsciousness. Other symptoms and signs, including of the pulse and tongue, depend on the condition underlying Liver-Wind.

b) Phlegm-Fire harassing upwards

Slight tremor of the limbs, hypertension, oedema, mental confusion, unconsciousness, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with a sticky coating, Wiry-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

c) Empty-Wind

Slight tremor and twitching of the limbs, especially if occurring after delivery; dizziness, palpitations, sweating, pale face, Pale and Short tongue, Fine-Scattered pulse.

d) Blood deficiency

Mild convulsions of the legs that are worse in the evening, insomnia, palpitations, blurred vision, dizziness, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

16. FOETUS NOT GROWING

a) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Slow foetal growth, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale

complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Slow foetal growth in the fifth and sixth months, tiredness, loose stools, poor appetite, backache, dizziness, Pale and Swollen tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

17. BREECH PRESENTATION

a) Liver-Qi stagnation

Breech presentation, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

b) Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Breech presentation, obesity, feeling of heaviness of the body, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale and Swollen tongue, Soft pulse.

c) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Breech presentation, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

18. HABITUAL MISCARRIAGE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Empty

Kidney-Yang deficiency

History of miscarriage early in the pregnancy, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Qixue, BL-23 Shenshu, Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai). Moxa.

Kidney-Yin deficiency

History of repeated miscarriage (usually in the first 3 months) and infertility; dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Qixue, Ren Mai (LU-7 Lieque with KI-6 Zhaohai), Sanyinjiao.

b) Full

Blood-Heat

History of repeated miscarriages, often beyond the first 3 months; thirst, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, history of heavy periods, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing and Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, LIV-3 Taichong, KI-2 Rangu, SP-10 Xuehai, KI-14 Siman.

Blood stasis

History of repeated miscarriages, abdominal pain, history of painful periods, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture

Chong Mai (SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan), KI-14 Siman, LIV-3 Taichong, SP-10 Xuehai.

c) Other patterns

Spleen-Qi deficiency

History of repeated miscarriages after the first 3 months, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Blood deficiency

History of repeated miscarriages, dizziness, blurred vision, history of scanty periods, insomnia, depression, dry hair and skin, Pale and Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

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The problems after childbirth discussed are:

1. Retention of placenta
2. Persistent lochial discharge
3. Retention of lochia
4. Abdominal pain
5. Vaginal bleeding
6. Urinary difficulty
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14. Breast milk not flowing
15. Spontaneous flow of milk
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18. Convulsions
19. Amenorrhoea after miscarriage



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember to pay attention to invigorating Blood after childbirth. The closer to the childbirth, the more one needs to invigorate Blood. As a rule of thumb, within 3 weeks from childbirth, place the emphasis on invigorating Blood (and nourishing Blood secondarily); after 3 weeks, place the emphasis on nourishing Blood (and invigorating Blood secondarily).

1. RETENTION OF PLACENTA

a) Kidney-Qi deficiency

Retention of the placenta, abdominal distension, abdominal pain that is better with pressure, abundant lochia, pale complexion, tiredness, breathlessness, backache, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

b) Liver-Blood stasis

Retention of the placenta, abdominal pain, retention of lochia, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Cold in the Uterus

Retention of the placenta, abdominal pain that is alleviated by application of heat, feeling cold, scanty lochia, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Tight pulse.

2. PERSISTENT LOCHIAL DISCHARGE

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

a) Kidney-Qi deficiency

Persistent lochial discharge that is red, profuse, dilute and without odour, dizziness, exhaustion, breathlessness, backache, sweating, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

b) Liver-Blood stasis

Persistent lochial discharge that is dark, scanty, and with clots, abdominal pain that is alleviated by passing clots, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Blood Heat

Persistent lochial discharge that is dark in colour, red face, thirst, feeling of heat, anxiety, abdominal pain, dry stools, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

d) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Persistent lochial discharge that is dilute and scarlet red, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, 5-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

3. RETENTION OF LOCHIA

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 20](#)

a) Qi stagnation and Blood stasis

No lochial discharge or scanty discharge with clots, or a discharge that stops and starts, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

b) Stagnation of Cold and Stasis of Blood

Absent or scanty dark lochial discharge with small stringy clots, abdominal pain relieved by the

application of heat, cold limbs, Bluish-Purple tongue, Tight pulse.

c) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Retention of lochia, no abdominal pain, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

4. ABDOMINAL PAIN

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull abdominal pain after childbirth that is relieved by pressure and after eating, scanty but continuous uterine bleeding with pale blood, dizziness, tiredness, blurred vision, constipation, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Blood Stasis

Severe abdominal pain after childbirth that is worse with pressure and after eating, discharge of dark lochia, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Retention of Food

Abdominal and epigastric pain after childbirth, feeling of fullness of the abdomen and epigastrium, foul breath, belching, thick tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

d) Cold in the Uterus

Severe abdominal pain that is alleviated by the application of heat and by drinking warm liquids, cold limbs, dark lochia, Bluish-Purple tongue, Tight pulse.

5. VAGINAL BLEEDING

a) Kidney-Qi deficiency

Profuse bleeding after childbirth, pale-dilute blood, sweating, tiredness, exhaustion, pale complexion, palpitations, backache, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Liver-Blood stasis

Bleeding after childbirth, dark blood with clots, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

6. URINARY DIFFICULTY

This may include pain on urination, difficult urination, frequent urination, or slight retention of urine.

a) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Frequency/incontinence of urine or retention of urine after childbirth, feeling of fullness and distension in the hypogastrium, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Kidney-Qi deficiency

Frequency/incontinence of urine or retention of urine after childbirth, backache, dizziness, feeling cold, pale complexion, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Liver-Qi stagnation

Difficult urination after childbirth, feeling of distension in the lower abdomen, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

d) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Bladder-Heat

Frequency of urination after childbirth, blood in the urine, burning on urination, anxiety, feeling of heat, dry lips, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, night-sweating, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

e) Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Urinary retention after childbirth, no abdominal distension or pain, dizziness, breathlessness, sweating, dislike of speaking, depression, tiredness, poor appetite, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

f) Injury to the Bladder

Incontinence of urine after childbirth, blood in the urine, Wiry pulse on the left-Rear position.

7. CONSTIPATION

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Constipation after childbirth, difficult defecation with dry stools, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, blurred vision, tiredness, depression, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Constipation after childbirth, difficulty in defecation, exhaustion and sweating after defecation, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

c) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Constipation after childbirth with dry stools, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

d) Cold in the Uterus

Constipation after childbirth, difficult defecation, abdominal pain relieved by the application of heat, scanty lochia, Bluish-Purple tongue, Tight pulse.

8. SWEATING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Kidney-Qi deficiency

Daytime sweating after childbirth, pale complexion, breathlessness, weak voice, tiredness, backache, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Night-time sweating after childbirth, insomnia, dry throat, dry mouth with a desire to drink in small sips, dizziness, tinnitus, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

9. DIZZINESS

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Dizziness after childbirth, scanty lochia, blurred vision, tingling, dull-pale complexion, palpitations, insomnia, depression, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Blood stasis

Dizziness after childbirth, dark lochia, abdominal pain, mental restlessness, palpitations, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Kidney deficiency

Dizziness after childbirth, backache, tinnitus, tiredness. Other symptoms and signs, including tongue and pulse, depend on whether there is a Kidney-Yin or a Kidney-Yang deficiency.

10. OEDEMA

a) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Oedema after childbirth, more on the face or abdomen, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Qi stagnation and Blood stasis

Oedema after childbirth, abdominal pain, joint pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Oedema of the limbs after childbirth, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

d) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Oedema of the ankles after childbirth, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

e) Damp-Heat

Oedema of the limbs after childbirth, swelling and heat of the joints, feeling of heaviness, feeling of oppression of the chest, sticky taste, dark urine, difficult urination, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

11. FEVER

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Invasion of external toxins

High fever after childbirth, lower abdominal pain that is worse with pressure, scanty lochial discharge that is dark and offensive, mental restlessness, thirst, delirium, convulsions, scanty-dark urine, constipation, Red tongue with a thick-sticky-yellow coating and red points, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Invasion of Wind-Cold

Fever after childbirth, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing, body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

c) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Fever after childbirth, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

d) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Low-grade fever after childbirth, sweating, exhaustion, pallor, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

e) Liver-Blood deficiency

Continuous low-grade fever after childbirth, sweating, blurred vision, palpitations, dizziness, tiredness, insomnia, tingling of the limbs, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

f) Liver-Blood Stasis

Fever after childbirth, feeling of heat, scanty lochial discharge, abdominal pain, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

g) Steaming Breast

Low-grade fever 2 or 3 days after childbirth, breast milk that does not flow freely or no milk at all, irritability; distension, hardness, and pain of the breasts, which feel lumpy; sticky-yellow tongue coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

h) Retention of Food

Low-grade fever 3 or 4 days after childbirth, fever higher in the afternoon, bad digestion, feeling of fullness and distension of the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, belching, foul breath, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

12. JOINT PAIN

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Dull ache in the joints after childbirth, tingling of the limbs, dizziness, blurred vision, insomnia, depression, tiredness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Invasion of Wind

Pain in the joints after childbirth with sudden onset, contraction of joints, fever, shivers, Floating pulse.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Severe joint pain after childbirth, stiffness of the joints, contraction of the limbs, abdominal pain, scanty lochial discharge, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

d) Liver-Blood and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Dull joint pain after childbirth, especially in the knees and lower back; tiredness, dizziness, backache, frequent urination, feeling cold, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak and Choppy pulse.

13. HYPOCHONDRIAL PAIN

a) Liver-Blood deficiency

Bilateral dull hypochondrial pain aggravated by exertion and alleviated by rest, palpitations, blurred vision, dizziness, tiredness, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

b) Liver-Qi stagnation

Right-sided hypochondrial pain and distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

c) Liver-Blood stasis

Left-sided, stabbing hypochondrial pain, retention of lochia, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

14. BREAST MILK NOT FLOWING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Insufficient or absent breast milk, watery milk, *no* feeling of distension of the breasts, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Liver-Qi stagnation

Absent or scanty breast milk, feeling of distension, hardness and pain of the breasts, hypochondrial distension, sighing, irritability, tongue Red on the sides, Wiry pulse.

15. SPONTANEOUS FLOW OF MILK

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Spontaneous flow of milk a few days after childbirth, scanty but constant flow of watery milk, soft breasts, *no* feeling of distension of the breasts, dull epigastric pain, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

b) Liver-Fire

Spontaneous trickling of milk after childbirth, dense milk, feeling of distension of the breasts, hypochondrial

distension, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

16. POST-NATAL DEPRESSION/ PSYCHOSIS

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Empty

Liver- and Heart-Blood deficiency

Post-natal depression, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, poor memory, anxiety, dull-pale complexion, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of the limbs, scanty menstruation, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-14 Jueque, Du-24 Shenting, Du-20 Baihui.

b) Full

Heart-Blood stasis

Post-natal psychosis, manic behaviour, aggressive behaviour, delusions, hallucinations, suicidal, palpitations, chest pain, purple lips, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Choppy pulse.

Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, Ren-17 Shanzhong, Ren-14 Jueque, BL-14 Jueyinshu, Du-24 Shenting, G.B.-17 Zhengying, G.B.-18 Chengling.

c) Other patterns

Liver- and Heart-Yin deficiency

Post-natal depression, poor memory, anxiety, mental restlessness, scanty breast milk, loss of libido, palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, night-sweating, dry throat, numbness or tingling of the limbs, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, dull-pale complexion, withered and brittle nails, dry skin and nails, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

17. COLLAPSE

a) Collapse of Qi with deficiency of Blood

Profuse bleeding after childbirth, sudden vertigo, pale complexion, palpitations, fainting, cold limbs, profuse sweating, Pale and Short tongue, Fine or Scattered pulse.

b) Blood stasis

Retention of lochia or scanty lochia, abdominal pain, feeling of fullness under the heart, chest pain, cough, fainting, mouth closed, dark complexion, Purple-Stiff tongue, Wiry pulse.

18. CONVULSIONS

a) Blood and Yin deficiency with Empty Wind

Profuse loss of blood during childbirth, tremor of limbs, rigidity of spine, pale complexion or malar flush, tongue without coating, pulse Choppy or Floating-Empty.

b) Exterior invasion of Toxin

Shivers and fever soon after childbirth, headache, stiff neck, rigidity of spine, lock jaw, convulsions; in severe

cases, opisthotonos; Red-Stiff tongue with yellow coating and red points, Wiry pulse.

19. AMENORRHOEA AFTER MISCARRIAGE

a) Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Amenorrhoea after miscarriage, abdomen soft to the touch, *no* abdominal distension or pain, *no* vaginal discharge, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

b) Liver-Blood stasis

Amenorrhoea after miscarriage, abdominal pain, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

c) Liver-Qi stagnation

Amenorrhoea after miscarriage, abdominal distension, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, breast distension, depression, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

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Breast Signs

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Breast distension*Full**Empty**Other patterns***Swollen breasts****Breast pain****Breast lumps****Redness and swelling of the breasts****Milky nipple discharge****Sticky-yellow nipple discharge****Bloody discharge from the nipple****Cracked nipples****Inverted nipples****Peau d'orange****Small breasts**

The breast signs discussed are:

1. Breast distension
2. Swollen breasts
3. Breast pain
4. Breast lumps
5. Redness and swelling of the breasts
6. Milky nipple discharge
7. Sticky-yellow nipple discharge
8. Bloody discharge from the nipple
9. Cracked nipples
10. Inverted nipples
11. Peau d'orange
12. Small breasts

1. BREAST DISTENSION

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 12](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

a) Full**i) Liver-Qi stagnation**

Breast distension which may be unilateral or bilateral, more obvious on the lateral side, decreasing after the period, breasts relatively hard, premenstrual tension, hypochondrial distension, moodiness, irritability, Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture: G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou, G.B.-21 Jianjing, G.B.-41 Zulinqi.

ii) Phlegm and Qi stagnation

Swelling and distension of the breasts that is relatively soft, obesity, a feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of sputum, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

Acupuncture: G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou, G.B.-21 Jianjing, G.B.-41 Zulinqi, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanyinjiao, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

b) Empty**i) Deficiency of Qi and Blood**

Slight distension of the breasts, no pain, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

Acupuncture: Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-8 Ququan, G.B.-41 Zulinqi.

ii) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Slight breast distension which occasionally may even occur *after* the period, tiredness, lethargy, feeling cold,

lower backache, cold limbs, weak limbs, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

Acupuncture: Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-7 Fuli, Du-4 Mingmen, G.B.-41 Zulinqi. Moxa.

c) Other Patterns

i) Lung-Qi stagnation

A feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, a feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides in the chest area, pulse very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

ii) Phlegm with Lung-Qi stagnation

Phlegm in the throat, a feeling of a lump in the throat, a feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, difficulty in swallowing, sighing, sadness, irritability, depression, sputum in the throat, tongue slightly Swollen on the sides in the chest area, Slippery pulse that is also very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

2. SWOLLEN BREASTS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 12](#)

i) Liver-Qi stagnation with Phlegm

Severe breast distension and swelling, breast pain, premenstrual tension, irritability, hypochondrial distension, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

ii) Liver-Qi stagnation with Phlegm-Heat

Severe breast distension and swelling, breast pain, premenstrual tension, irritability, hypochondrial distension, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, a feeling of heat, thirst with no desire to drink, red face, Swollen tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

iii) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency with Phlegm

Slight breast distension and swelling, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, obesity, tiredness,

feeling cold, lower backache, cold limbs, lethargy, loose stools, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak and slightly Slippery pulse.

3. BREAST PAIN

i) Severe Liver-Qi stagnation

Breast pain and distension that are worse premenstrually, irregular periods, premenstrual tension, hypochondrial distension, moodiness, irritability, Wiry pulse.

ii) Liver-Qi stagnation with Phlegm

Breast pain and distension, swollen breasts, feeling of a lump in the throat, phlegm in the throat, premenstrual tension, hypochondrial distension, feeling of oppression of the chest, irritability, irregular periods, Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

iii) Liver-Blood stasis

Stabbing breast pain, chest pain, period pain, dark menstrual blood with dark clots, irregular periods, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

iv) Toxic Heat

Redness, pain and swelling of the breast, feeling of heat, fever, thirst, Red tongue with red points and dry-sticky-yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

4. BREAST LUMPS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 12](#); Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#); Part 3 Palpation, [Chapter 51](#)

i) Liver-Qi stagnation

Lumpy breasts, small nodules that are *not* hard and which decrease in size after the period, severe premenstrual breast distension, premenstrual tension, pain in the breasts, depression, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

ii) Liver-Qi stagnation with Blood stasis

Hard breast lumps which are immovable and may be painful, chest pain, irregular periods, painful periods, premenstrual tension, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

iii) Phlegm and Qi stagnation

Soft, painless breast lumps, moveable and slipping under the finger on palpation, premenstrual breast distension and swelling, premenstrual tension, a feeling of a lump in the throat, a feeling of oppression and distension of the chest, irritability, depression, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Wiry-Slippy pulse.

iv) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency with Phlegm

Lumpy breasts; soft nodules; a feeling of heaviness; a feeling of oppression of the chest; tiredness; feeling cold; poor appetite; loose stools; dizziness; tinnitus; backache; profuse-pale urination; urination at night; irregular periods; Pale, Swollen and wet tongue with sticky coating; Deep-Weak and slightly Slippy pulse.

v) Disharmony of Directing and Penetrating vessels

Lumpy breasts, small-hard nodules, swollen breasts, premenstrual breast distension, late cycle, infertility, irregular periods, anxiety, abdominal pain, backache, cold feet, Pale tongue, Fine-Wiry pulse.

vi) Stagnant Liver Qi turned into Fire

Single large and hard breast lump, painful breasts, thirst, bitter taste, headaches, irritability, red face, dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with redder sides, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

vii) Phlegm with Lung-Qi stagnation

Soft and moveable breast lumps, phlegm in the throat, a feeling of a lump in the throat, feeling of oppression and distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, worry, irritability, depression, tongue slightly Swollen on the sides in the chest area, pulse that is Slippy and very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

viii) Toxic Heat

Large breast lump with discharge of yellow fluid, pain in the breast, thirst, bitter taste, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and thick-sticky-dry yellow coating, Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

ix) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Chronic breast lumps, loss of weight, dark complexion, tiredness, irregular periods, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry eyes, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

5. REDNESS AND SWELLING OF THE BREASTS**Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat with Blood stasis**

Breasts red, hard, painful and swollen; irregular periods; heavy periods; irritability; tongue with Reddish-Purple sides; Wiry-Rapid pulse.

i) Toxic Heat

Red, swollen, painful breasts; thirst; feeling of heat; mental restlessness; Red tongue with red points and sticky-yellow coating; Overflowing-Slippy-Rapid pulse.

ii) Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat

Red, swollen and distended breasts; hypochondrial distension; irritability; premenstrual tension; heavy periods; tongue with Red sides; Wiry-Rapid pulse.

6. MILKY NIPPLE DISCHARGE**i) Severe deficiency of Qi and Blood**

Slight milky nipple discharge that is aggravated by exertion and ameliorated by rest, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, palpitations, tiredness, blurred vision, dull-pale complexion, dizziness, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

ii) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Slight milky nipple discharge that is aggravated by exertion and ameliorated by rest, heavy or scanty periods, premenstrual oedema, tiredness, lower backache, feeling cold, cold limbs, loose stools, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

iii) Liver-Qi stagnation

Premenstrual milky nipple discharge, breast distension, premenstrual tension, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

7. STICKY-YELLOW NIPPLE DISCHARGE

i) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Sticky-yellow nipple discharge, breast distension and pain, irregular periods, painful periods, midcycle pain, yellow vaginal discharge, urinary discomfort, tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

ii) Toxic Heat

Sticky-yellow nipple discharge; redness, swelling and pain of the breasts; feeling of heat; thirst; mental restlessness; Red tongue with red points on the sides and sticky-yellow coating; Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

8. BLOODY DISCHARGE FROM THE NIPPLE

i) Toxic Heat

Bloody discharge from the nipple; redness, swelling and pain of the breasts; feeling of heat; thirst; mental restlessness; Red tongue with red points on the sides and sticky-yellow coating; Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

ii) Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat

Intermittent bloody discharge from the nipple, premenstrual breast distension, premenstrual tension, irritability, irregular periods, feeling of heat, red face, tongue with Red sides, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

iii) Deficiency of the Liver and Kidneys and of the Penetrating Vessel

Intermittent bloody discharge from the nipple that is aggravated by exertion and ameliorated by rest, heavy or scanty periods, tiredness, dizziness, tinnitus, backache, Deep-Weak pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether there is a Yin or a Yang deficiency.

9. CRACKED NIPPLES

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 12](#)

i) Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Fire

Cracked nipples, flaking skin over the nipples, stabbing pain in the nipple, irritability, thirst, bitter taste, Red

tongue with redder sides and yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

ii) Yin deficiency with Blood-Heat

Cracked nipple with dry skin, slight pain, bleeding from the nipple, crusts on the nipple, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, mental restlessness, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, dry mouth, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

10. INVERTED NIPPLES

i) Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Blood stasis with Phlegm

Inverted nipples, distended and painful breasts, premenstrual tension, irregular periods, a feeling of oppression of the chest, hypochondrial distension and pain, painful periods, tongue Swollen and with Purple sides, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

ii) Toxic Heat with Blood stasis

Inverted nipples; redness, pain and swelling of the breasts; hypochondrial pain; feeling of heat; mental restlessness; thirst; irregular periods; painful periods; Red tongue with Reddish-Purple sides and red points and a sticky-yellow coating; Overflowing-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

11. PEAU D'ORANGE

'Peau d'orange' means 'orange skin', and it refers to an area of the breast with many small dimples resembling an orange skin.

i) Liver-Qi stagnation and Liver-Blood stasis with Phlegm

Peau d'orange, distended and painful breasts, premenstrual tension, irregular periods, a feeling of oppression of the chest, hypochondrial distension and pain, painful periods, tongue Swollen and with Purple sides, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

ii) Toxic Heat with Blood stasis

Peau d'orange; redness, pain and swelling of the breasts; hypochondrial pain; feeling of heat; mental restlessness; thirst; irregular periods; painful periods; Red tongue

with Reddish-Purple sides and red points and a sticky-yellow coating; Overflowing-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

12. SMALL BREASTS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 12](#)

i) Qi and Blood deficiency

Gradual decrease in breast size, poor appetite, loose stools, weak voice, tiredness, blurred vision, dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs, palpitations, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Weak or Choppy pulse.

ii) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Gradual decrease in breast size, dry vagina, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, delayed cycle, infertility, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache,

dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, night-sweating, dry stools, tongue normal-coloured without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

iii) Stomach-Qi deficiency

Sagging breasts, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness especially in the morning, weak limbs, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

iv) Blood deficient and dry

Gradual decrease in breast size, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, scanty menstruation, dull-pale complexion, dry eyes, dry skin and hair, dry nails, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

Miscellaneous Gynaecological Symptoms

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Infertility

Menopausal syndrome

Abdominal masses

Vaginal discharge

White vaginal discharge

Yellow vaginal discharge

Red-white vaginal discharge

Five-colour vaginal discharge

Vaginal itching

Genital eczema

Vulvar sores

Swelling of the vulva

Prolapse of uterus

Prolapse of vagina

Leukoplakia

Dyspareunia

Bleeding on intercourse

Lack of libido

Loss of pubic hair

Excessive pubic hair

11. Leukoplakia
12. Dyspareunia
13. Bleeding on intercourse
14. Lack of libido
15. Loss of pubic hair
16. Excessive pubic hair

1. INFERTILITY

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

i) Kidney deficiency

Primary or secondary infertility, late periods, scanty periods, backache, dizziness, tinnitus. Other symptoms, including tongue and pulse, depend on whether there is Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency. This is the most common cause of infertility, accounting for over half of the cases.¹

ii) Blood deficiency

Secondary infertility, scanty periods or amenorrhoea, late periods, tiredness, dizziness, blurred vision, pale complexion, Pale-Thin tongue, Choppy pulse.

iii) Cold in the Uterus

Primary infertility; late periods; painful periods; bright-red blood with small, dark clots; feeling cold during the period; cold limbs; backache; Pale tongue; Tight pulse.

iv) Dampness in the Lower Burner

Secondary infertility, excessive vaginal discharge, late periods, midcycle pain and bleeding, a feeling of heaviness, obesity, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

v) Blood Heat

Secondary infertility, early periods, heavy periods, feeling of heat, thirst, anxiety, Red tongue, Rapid-Overflowing pulse.

The gynaecological symptoms discussed are:

1. Infertility
2. Menopausal syndrome
3. Abdominal masses
4. Vaginal discharge
 - a) White
 - b) Yellow
 - c) Red-white
 - d) Five-colour
5. Vaginal itching
6. Genital eczema
7. Vulvar sores
8. Swelling of the vulva
9. Prolapse of uterus
10. Prolapse of vagina

vi) Qi stagnation

Secondary infertility, irregular periods, premenstrual tension, breast distension, irritability, Wiry pulse.

vii) Blood stasis

Secondary infertility; painful periods; dark blood with large, dark clots; Purple tongue; Wiry pulse.

viii) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Blood Empty Heat

Secondary infertility, heavy periods, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, five-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

- More than half of the cases of infertility are due to a Kidney deficiency.
- That means that nearly half of the cases are due to a Full condition and especially Damp-Phlegm in the Uterus.

2. MENOPAUSAL SYNDROME

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#)

i) Kidney-Yin deficiency

Hot flushes, dryness of the vagina, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

ii) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Hot flushes, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

iii) Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Hot flushes, night-sweating, dryness of the vagina, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, cold feet, frequent urination. The tongue is Pale if Kidney-Yang deficiency predominates and Red if Kidney-Yin deficiency predominates.

iv) Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency with Liver-Yang rising

Hot flushes, dryness of the vagina, dry eyes, blurred vision, headache, irritability, insomnia, Red tongue without coating, pulse Floating-Empty and slightly Wiry on the left.

v) Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Hot flushes, dryness of the vagina, night-sweating, palpitations, insomnia, dizziness, tinnitus, anxiety, mental restlessness, depression, feeling of heat in the evening, dry mouth and throat, poor memory, tongue without coating, pulse Floating-Empty.

vi) Accumulation of Phlegm and stagnation of Qi

Hot flushes, obesity, a feeling of oppression of the chest, expectoration of scanty phlegm, feeling of distension of the breasts, irritability, sighing, nausea, depression, tongue slightly Red on the sides, Wiry-Slippery pulse. This pattern frequently appears in early menopause.

vii) Blood stasis

Hot flushes; night-sweating; anxiety; mental restlessness; agitation; menopause preceded by a period of time when menses are very irregular, stopping for a long time and then starting again; insomnia; possibly hypertension; Purple tongue; Wiry pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

Remember: menopausal symptoms are not always due to Kidney-Yin deficiency. A simultaneous deficiency of both Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang (in varying proportions) is the most common situation.

3. ABDOMINAL MASSES

Part 5 Symptoms and Signs, [Chapter 71](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 16](#)

i) Liver-Qi stagnation

Moveable abdominal masses which come and go, abdominal distension and pain, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, depression, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

ii) Stagnation of Qi and stasis of Blood

Hard and immovable abdominal masses, abdominal distension and pain, late periods, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

iii) Blood stasis knotted in the interior

Hard, immovable and painful abdominal masses; dark complexion; dry skin; feeling cold; amenorrhoea; painful periods; late periods; Purple tongue; Choppy pulse.

iv) Damp-Phlegm

Relatively soft abdominal masses, sputum in the throat, excessive vaginal discharge, ovarian cysts, sputum in the throat, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

4. VAGINAL DISCHARGE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 46](#); Part 4 Hearing and Smelling, [Chapter 54](#)

a) White vaginal discharge**i) Spleen-Qi deficiency**

Profuse-white vaginal discharge that is aggravated by exertion, sticky without offensive odour, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

ii) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Profuse and dilute, white vaginal discharge, no offensive odour, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

iii) Cold-Dampness

Profuse and sticky-white vaginal discharge, a feeling of heaviness, abdominal fullness, sticky taste, thick-sticky-white tongue coating, Slippery-Slow pulse.

iv) Damp-Heat

White vaginal discharge that may look like curdled milk, offensive odour, a feeling of heaviness, thirst with no desire to drink, vaginal itching and redness, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

b) Yellow vaginal discharge**i) Damp-Heat**

Yellow, profuse vaginal discharge, sticky with strong odour, vaginal redness and itching, a feeling of heaviness, abdominal fullness, thirst with no desire to drink, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

ii) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic, pale-yellow vaginal discharge, abundant and dilute, no strong odour, irregular periods, heavy periods, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

c) Red-white vaginal discharge**i) Damp-Heat**

Red-white vaginal discharge, abundant and sticky, vaginal redness, itching and swelling, abdominal pain, painful urination, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness, thirst with no desire to drink, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

ii) Liver-Qi stagnation with Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Red-white vaginal discharge; predominantly red, abundant and sticky with strong odour; vaginal itching; abdominal distension and pain; irritability; dizziness; hypochondrial pain; unilateral sticky-yellow coating; Wiry-Slippery pulse.

iii) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Red-white vaginal discharge, scanty and dilute, vaginal burning and itching, difficult urination, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, five-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

d) Five-colour vaginal discharge

The 'five-colour vaginal discharge' may be watery like rice soup, like bloody water or like pus, usually with an offensive odour. The five colours are white, yellow, red, green and dark brown (like soya sauce).

i) Damp-Heat

Five-colour vaginal discharge, abundant and sticky, with an offensive odour, a feeling of heaviness,

abdominal fullness, thirst with no desire to drink, a sticky taste, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

ii) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Five-colour vaginal discharge, scanty without odour, vaginal itching and redness, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, 5-palm heat, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

iii) Cold in the Lower Burner

Five-colour vaginal discharge that is watery and with an offensive odour, feeling of cold, abdominal pain, painful periods, Pale tongue, Tight pulse.

iv) Liver-Qi stagnation with Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Five-colour vaginal discharge without odour, abdominal distension, hypochondrial pain, bitter taste, thirst with no desire to drink, irritability, tongue with unilateral sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

v) Toxic Heat

Profuse yellow, blood-stained vaginal discharge; offensive odour; feeling of heat; thirst; dark urine; Red tongue with a sticky-yellow coating; Overflowing-Slippery-Rapid pulse.

5. VAGINAL ITCHING

i) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Intense vaginal itching, yellow vaginal discharge, pain on intercourse, irritability, insomnia, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

ii) Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Slight vaginal itching, white vaginal discharge, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, a feeling of heaviness, Pale tongue with sticky-white coating, Weak and slightly Slippery pulse.

iii) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Vaginal itching with a burning sensation, dryness of the vagina, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling of heat in the evening, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

6. GENITAL ECZEMA

Part 5 Symptoms and signs, [Chapter 77](#); Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 21](#)

i) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Genital eczema with papules that ooze a fluid, red and moist genital area, vaginal itching, difficult urination, tongue with Red sides and sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

ii) Blood deficient and dry

Genital eczema with thickening of the skin, dryness of the vagina, dry-red rash, vaginal itching, Pale and dry tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

7. VULVAR SORES

i) Toxic Heat with Liver-Fire and Damp-Heat

Vulvar sores, redness, swelling, heat and pain of external genitalia, oozing of yellow fluid, Red tongue with redder sides, thick-sticky-yellow coating with red spots, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

ii) Toxic Heat with Blood stasis in the Liver Channel

Vulvar sores, redness, swelling, heat and pain of external genitalia, dyspareunia, oozing of yellow fluid, Reddish-Purple tongue, thick-sticky-yellow coating with red spots, Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

iii) Retention of Cold

Vulvar erosion and pain, pale lesions in genital area, chronic condition with repeated attacks, lassitude, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

8. SWELLING OF THE VULVA

i) Toxic Heat with Blood stasis in the Liver channel

Swelling of the vulva, pain in the perineum, genital papular eruptions, sticky-yellow vaginal discharge, hypogastric pain, feeling of heat, mental restlessness, Reddish-Purple tongue with thick-sticky-yellow coating and red spots on the root and sides, Slippery-Rapid-Firm pulse.

ii) Damp-Phlegm in the Lower Burner

Swelling of the vulva; feeling of heaviness of the abdomen, abdominal fullness, ovarian cysts, painful periods, excessive vaginal discharge, Swollen tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

iii) Damp-Heat and Toxic-Heat in the Liver channel

Swelling of the vulva; pain in the perineum; genital papular eruptions; sticky-yellow vaginal discharge; vaginal itching; vulvar eczema or sores; genital papular skin rashes and itching; midcycle bleeding and/or pain; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium; bitter taste; poor appetite; nausea; feeling of heaviness of the body; urinary difficulty; burning on urination; dark urine; Red tongue with redder sides and red points and a thick-sticky-yellow coating; Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.

9. PROLAPSE OF UTERUS

i) Spleen-Qi sinking

Prolapse of the uterus, a feeling of bearing down in the lower abdomen, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

ii) Kidney-Qi deficient and sinking

Prolapse of the uterus, frequent urination, bearing-down sensation, backache, frequent urination, slight incontinence of urine, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

10. PROLAPSE OF VAGINA

i) Spleen-Qi sinking

Prolapse of vagina, feeling of bearing down in the abdomen, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

ii) Kidney-Qi not Firm

Prolapse of vagina, soreness and weakness of the lower back, weak knees, clear-frequent urination, weak-stream urination, abundant urination, dribbling after urination, incontinence of urine, urination at night, prolapse of uterus, chronic white vaginal discharge, tiredness, a dragging-down feeling in the lower abdomen, recurrent

miscarriage, feeling cold, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

11. LEUKOPLAKIA

i) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Leukoplakia, vaginal itching and swelling, yellow vaginal discharge, difficult urination, bitter taste, a feeling of heaviness, irritability, tongue with Red sides and sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

ii) Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

Leukoplakia, thickening of the skin, ulcers, white vaginal discharge, sticky-white tongue coating, Weak and Slippery pulse.

iii) Liver-Blood deficiency

Leukoplakia, dryness and itching of the vagina that is worse at night, dull complexion, blurred vision, dizziness, scanty periods, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

iv) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Leukoplakia, dryness of the vagina, backache, tinnitus, dizziness, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

v) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Leukoplakia, vaginal itching, scanty periods, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

12. DYSPAREUNIA

i) Liver-Blood stasis

Dyspareunia, hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, painful periods, dark complexion, Purple tongue, Wiry pulse.

ii) Dampness in the Lower Burner

Dyspareunia, feeling of heaviness of the abdomen, excessive vaginal discharge, painful periods, sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

iii) Liver-Fire

Dyspareunia, heavy periods, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red

tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

iv) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Dyspareunia, heavy periods, irregular periods, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, dry eyes, dry hair, dry nails, insomnia, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to sip water, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

13. BLEEDING ON INTERCOURSE

i) Kidney- and Liver-Yin deficiency

Bleeding on intercourse with fresh blood, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

ii) Damp-Heat in the Directing and Penetrating vessels

Bleeding on intercourse with dark-sticky blood, yellow or white-red vaginal discharge, backache, abdominal pain and fullness, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

iii) Spleen-Qi deficiency

Bleeding on intercourse with pale dilute blood, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, loose stools, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

14. LACK OF LIBIDO

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 45](#)

i) Heart-Qi deficiency

Lack of libido, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale complexion, tiredness, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

ii) Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty Heat

Lack of libido, palpitations, mental restlessness, anxiety, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to sip water, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty

urine, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

iii) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Lack of libido, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, feeling cold, weak knees, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

iv) Liver-Blood deficiency

Lack of libido, dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, numbness or tingling of limbs, dull-pale complexion, Pale tongue, Choppy or Fine pulse.

v) Liver-Qi stagnation

Lack of libido, hypochondrial or epigastric distension, irritability, moodiness, Wiry pulse.

vi) Dampness in the Lower Burner

Lack of libido, excessive vaginal discharge, feeling of heaviness in the abdomen, painful periods, tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

15. LOSS OF PUBIC HAIR

i) Kidney-Essence deficiency

Loss of pubic hair, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, poor memory, loose teeth, premature greying of hair, infertility, sterility, Leather pulse.

ii) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Loss of pubic hair, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, bright-white complexion, loose stools, feeling cold, cold limbs, backache, dizziness, tinnitus, weak knees, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

16. EXCESSIVE PUBIC HAIR

i) Phlegm and Blood stasis

Excessive pubic hair, pain in the genital area, irregular and painful periods, feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen and Purple tongue, Slippery-Wiry pulse.

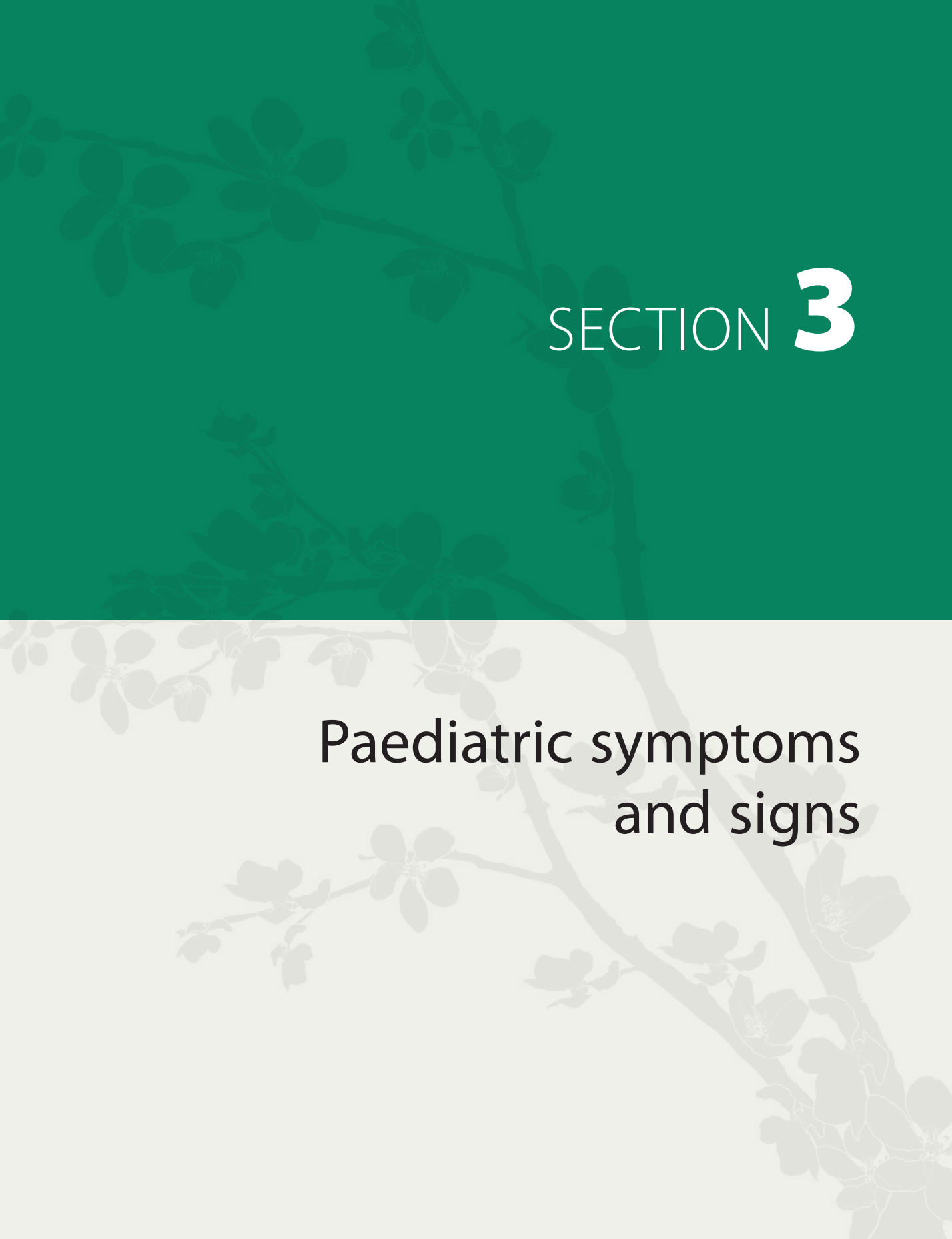
ii) Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat

Excessive pubic hair, dizziness, tinnitus, night-sweating, dry mouth with desire to sip water, backache, poor memory, dark-scanty urine, five-palm heat, malar flush, feeling of heat in the evening, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

END NOTES

1. Gynaecology Department of the Long Hua Hospital Affiliated to the Shanghai College of Traditional Chinese Medicine 1987 Report on the Differentiation and Treatment of 257 Cases of Infertility, *Journal of Chinese Medicine (Zhong Yi Za Zhi)*, vol. 28, no. 10, p. 38.

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SECTION 3

Paediatric symptoms and signs

INTRODUCTION

Section 3 of Part 5 deals with the symptoms and signs that are typical of children. The symptoms and signs of children are often quite distinct from those of adults; they include crying at night, Accumulation Disorder, nocturnal enuresis, late closure of fontanels, and various childhood diseases. In order to ask the right questions, we should therefore be familiar with the general principles of Chinese paediatrics.

Particularly important symptoms and signs are those revolving around digestion and the respiratory system, as these two are the areas of most common illness in children. Indeed, there is a link between these two, as many respiratory problems of children (especially those linked to a residual pathogenic factor) are often due to Phlegm, which itself is generally formed when there is a disharmony in the digestive system.

To clarify the links between Part 5, on Symptoms and Signs, and Part 1, on Observation, and Part 2, on Interrogation, I have indicated them in each of these parts (e.g. 'Ear ache', found in [Chapter 90](#) of Part 5, is also found in [Chapter 47](#) of Part 2).

The symptoms and signs discussed are:

1. Fever
2. Low-grade fever
3. Vomiting
4. Diarrhoea
5. Cough
6. Hot palms and soles
7. Constitutional weakness
8. Constipation in infancy
9. Retention of urine
10. Crying
11. Crying at night
12. Accumulation disorder
13. Pinworms
14. Roundworms
15. Nocturnal enuresis
16. Five Flaccidities
17. Five Retardations
18. Acute skin rash
19. Erysipelas
20. Jaundice
21. Chickenpox
22. Flapping of nostrils
23. Mumps
24. Acute convulsions
25. Chronic convulsions
26. Foetus toxin
27. Sunken fontanelles
28. Raised fontanelles
29. Late closure of fontanelles
30. White spots on the palate and tongue

Children's Problems

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Fever

Full

Other patterns

Low-grade fever

Vomiting

Diarrhoea

Empty

Full

Cough

Full

Empty

Wheezing

Full

Full/empty

Empty

Earache

Full

Full/empty

Glue ear

Hot palms and soles

Constitutional weakness

Empty

Constipation in infancy

Retention of urine in infancy

Crying

Crying at night in babies

Disturbed sleep

Full

Accumulation disorder

Pinworms

Roundworms

Nocturnal enuresis

Five Flaccidities

Five Retardations

Acute skin rash

Erysipelas

Jaundice

Chickenpox

Flapping nostrils

Mumps

Acute convulsions

Chronic convulsions

Foetus toxin

Sunken fontanelles

Raised fontanelles

Late closure of fontanelles

White spots on the palate and tongue

Long penis

The following children's problems are discussed:

1. Fever
2. Low-grade fever
3. Vomiting
4. Diarrhoea
5. Cough
6. Wheezing
7. Earache
8. Glue ear
9. Hot palms and soles
10. Constitutional weakness
11. Constipation in infancy
12. Retention of urine in infancy
13. Crying
14. Crying at night in babies
15. Disturbed sleep
16. Accumulation disorder
17. Pinworms
18. Roundworms
19. Nocturnal enuresis
20. Five Flaccidities
21. Five Retardations
22. Acute skin rash
23. Erysipelas
24. Jaundice
25. Chickenpox
26. Flapping of nostrils

27. Mumps
28. Acute convulsions
29. Chronic convulsions
30. Foetus toxin
31. Sunken fontanelles
32. Raised fontanelles
33. Late closure of fontanelles
34. White spots on the palate and tongue
35. Long penis

For problems such as learning difficulty and hyperactivity, see [Chapter 80](#).

1. FEVER

a) Full

i) External invasion of Wind-Cold

Low fever, aversion to cold, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing, body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Acupuncture: L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque.

ii) External invasion of Wind-Heat

Fever, aversion to cold, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi.

iii) Heat in Bright Yang

High fever, feeling of heat, throwing off bedclothes, thirst, irritability, crying, sweating, Red tongue with yellow coating, Rapid-Overflowing pulse. This corresponds to the Bright-Yang Channel Pattern within the Identification of Patterns according to the Six Stages, which is equivalent to the Stomach-Heat Pattern within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels.

Acupuncture: ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-37 Shangjuxu.

iv) Heat at the Ying level

High fever that is worse at night, delirium, fainting, dry mouth, macules, Red tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse. This corresponds to the patterns of Heat in the Pericardium or Heat in the Ying within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels.

Acupuncture: P-9 Zhongchong, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-44 Neiting.

v) Heat at the Blood level

High fever that is worse at night, delirium, fainting, dry mouth, pronounced and numerous dark macules, epistaxis, blood in the stools, blood in the urine, mental confusion, Reddish-Purple tongue without coating, Fine-Rapid pulse. This corresponds to the Blood-Heat Pattern at the Blood Level within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels.

Acupuncture: LIV-3 Taichong, KI-2 Rangu, L.I.-11 Quchi, SP-10 Xuehai.



CLINICAL NOTE

Remember: As long as the child is at the Bright Yang (Yang Ming) Level, there is no serious danger. There is a saying in Chinese medicine: nobody dies at the Bright Yang Level. If the child is at the Nutritive-Qi (Ying) or Blood Level, it is potentially dangerous. The main sign of Nutritive-Qi or Blood Level is macules.

b) Other Patterns

i) Dry-Heat in the Intestines

High fever that is worse in the afternoon, feeling of heat, throwing off bedclothes, constipation, abdominal fullness and pain, thirst, sweating, Red tongue with thick-dry-yellow coating, Deep-Full-Rapid pulse. This corresponds to the Bright-Yang Organ Pattern within the Identification of Patterns according to the Six Stages, which is equivalent to the Intestines Dry-Heat Pattern within the Identification of Patterns according to the Four Levels.

2. LOW-GRADE FEVER

i) Retention of food

Recurrent low-grade fever, epigastric fullness, loose stools, sour regurgitation, foul breath, abdominal pain, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

ii) Residual Heat in the Lungs

Low-grade fever, dry cough, feeling of heat, irritability, tongue Red in the front, Fine-Rapid pulse.

iii) Damp-Heat

Low-grade fever that is worse in the afternoon, sweating, a feeling of heaviness, thirst with no desire to drink, nausea, loose stools, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

iv) Qi deficiency

Low-grade fever, sweating, listlessness, shortness of breath, pale complexion, poor appetite, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

v) Yin deficiency

Low-grade fever in the afternoon, night-sweating, dry throat, mental restlessness, malar flush, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

3. VOMITING**i) Accumulation of breast milk from overfeeding in infants**

Vomiting of curdled milk with offensive odour, crying, better after vomiting, epigastric fullness and distension, stools with offensive odour.

ii) Damp-Heat in the Stomach and Spleen

Vomiting, nausea, sticky taste, skin rashes, a feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium and lower abdomen, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without desire to drink, loose stools with offensive odour, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

iii) Stomach-Qi deficiency

Vomiting of fluids, cold limbs, pale complexion, listlessness, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

iv) Stomach-Yin deficiency

Vomiting of thin fluids, retching, dry lips, dry mouth with desire to drink in small sips, irritability, crying, tongue without coating in the centre, Floating-Empty pulse.

v) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Vomiting of thin fluids, dull-pale complexion, cold limbs, listlessness, loose stools, Pale-Swollen tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

vi) Invasion of Cold in the Stomach

Sudden vomiting, epigastric pain, desire to drink warm liquids, thick-white tongue coating, Tight pulse.

4. DIARRHOEA**a) Empty****i) Spleen-Qi deficiency**

Chronic diarrhoea, poor appetite, tiredness, slight abdominal distension, pale complexion, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture: Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-25 Tianshu.

b) Full**i) Retention of food**

Loose stools, epigastric fullness and pain, foul breath, sour regurgitation, nausea, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture: Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-10 Xiawan, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-25 Tianshu.

ii) Invasion of Cold in the Spleen

Sudden diarrhoea, abdominal pain, feeling hot and cold, thick-white tongue coating, Tight pulse.

Acupuncture: ST-25 Tianshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, Ren-10 Xiawan, Ren-6 Qihai. Moxa.

iii) Invasion of Damp-Heat

Sudden diarrhoea with offensive odour, abdominal pain and fullness, irritability, feeling of heat, dark urine, sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: ST-25 Tianshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-39 Xiajuxu, L.I.-11 Quchi, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

5. COUGH

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 47](#)

a) Full**i) Invasion of Wind-Cold**

Cough with expectoration of white sputum, aversion to cold, fever, occipital headache, stiff neck, sneezing,

body aches, tongue with thin-white coating, Floating-Tight pulse.

Acupuncture: L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu.

ii) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Cough with expectoration of yellow sputum, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-12 Fengmen, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-1 Zhongfu.

iii) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Barking cough with expectoration of profuse sticky-yellow or green sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

iv) Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Loose cough with expectoration of profuse sticky-white sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture: LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

b) Empty

i) Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency

Slight cough with low sound, expectoration of thin sputum, shortness of breath, pale complexion, poor appetite, loose stools, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

Acupuncture: LU-9 Taiyuan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-13 Feishu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu.

6. WHEEZING

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 47](#)

a) Full

i) Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs

Acute wheezing, cough with expectoration of white sputum, pale face, shortness of breath, feeling of tightness of the chest, sticky-white coating on tongue, Slippery-Slow pulse.

Acupuncture: LU-5 Chize, LU-1 Zhongfu, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu. Moxa.

ii) Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs

Wheezing, loose cough with expectoration of profuse sticky-white sputum, shortness of breath, a feeling of oppression of the chest, Swollen tongue with a sticky-white coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture: LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

iii) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Acute wheezing, cough with expectoration of yellow sputum, feeling of oppression of the chest, slightly red face, shortness of breath, sticky-yellow coating on tongue, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, LU-1 Zhongfu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, L.I.-11 Quchi.

b) Full/Empty

iv) Residual Phlegm in the Lungs with Lung-Qi deficiency

Chronic wheezing, cough with occasional expectoration of scanty sputum, insomnia, feeling of oppression of the chest, tiredness, pale face, shortness of breath, Pale tongue with swelling in the Lung area, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture: LU-9 Taiyuan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-13 Feishu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

v) Residual Phlegm in the Lungs with Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic wheezing, cough with occasional expectoration of scanty sputum, insomnia, feeling of oppression of the chest, tiredness, pale face, shortness of breath, poor appetite, loose stools, desire to lie down,

Pale tongue with swelling in the Lung area, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture: Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu

b) Empty

i) Deficiency of the Defensive-Qi system of the Lungs and Kidneys

Chronic wheezing, allergic asthma, history of eczema, hay fever, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

Acupuncture: BL-13 Feishu, LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, BL-23 Shenshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi.

7. EARACHE

Part 2 Interrogation, [Chapter 47](#)

a) Full

i) Invasion of Wind-Heat in the Lesser-Yang channels

Acute earache, aversion to cold, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, slight sweating, tongue with Red sides and/or front, Floating-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, G.B.-2 Tinghui.

ii) Invasion of Damp-Heat in the Lesser-Yang channels

Acute earache, discharge from the ear, swollen glands, fever, aversion to cold, headache, irritability, body aches, nausea, indigestion, tongue with unilateral sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, G.B.-2 Tinghui, G.B.-41 Zulinqi, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

iii) Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver channels

Chronic earache, loss of hearing, feeling of pressure in the ear, blocked ears, on examination ear drum may be bleeding slightly, swollen glands, insomnia, irritability, hyperactivity, red face, nervous child, Red tongue with redder sides and sticky-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, G.B.-2 Tinghui, G.B.-41 Zulinqi, SP-9 Yinlingquan, LIV-3 Taichong.

b) Full/Empty

i) Residual Damp-Heat in the Lesser-Yang channels with Spleen-Qi deficiency

Chronic earache which comes and goes, feeling of pressure in the ear, blocked ears, periodically slightly swollen glands, irritability, insomnia, poor appetite, listlessness, pale face, Pale tongue with unilateral sticky-yellow coating, Soggy pulse.

Acupuncture: T.B.-5 Waiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, G.B.-2 Tinghui, G.B.-41 Zulinqi, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu.

8. GLUE EAR

'Glue ear' is a condition characterized by accumulation of fluid behind the ear drum which causes a blockage of the eustachian tube, with the result that air cannot enter the middle ear. When this occurs, the cells lining the middle ear begin to produce fluid, which can be runny or thick, eventually filling the middle ear; this may cause a severe decrease in hearing. Glue ear is most common in children between 2 and 4 years old. Glue ear may be associated with ear infections, but it may also occur without ear infections.

i) Damp-Phlegm

Glue ear, decreased hearing, dull headaches, sinus problems, poor concentration, listlessness, chronic catarrh, Swollen tongue with a sticky coating, Slippery pulse.

ii) Dampness

Glue ear, decreased hearing, dull frontal headaches, sinus problems, listlessness, tongue with sticky coating, Slippery pulse. Other symptoms and signs depend on whether Dampness is associated with Cold or Heat.



CLINICAL NOTE

Both earache and glue ear in children are nearly always due to residual Dampness in the ears. This usually occurs when a child suffers repeated invasions of Wind which are treated with antibiotics.

9. HOT PALMS AND SOLES

i) Accumulation Disorder with Spleen deficiency

Hot palms and soles, thin body, sallow complexion, withered hair, desire to lie down, increased desire to suckle, abdominal distension and fullness, red face, irritability, feeling of heat in the afternoon, night-sweating, restlessness at night, loose stools, turbid urine, sticky tongue coating, Weak-Soft pulse. 'Accumulation Disorder' is a paediatric condition characterised by accumulation of food in the stomach; it is equivalent to retention of food in adults.

ii) Blood and Yin deficiency

Hot palms and soles, listlessness, thin body, dry cough, dry mouth, feeling of heat in the afternoon, malar flush, night-sweating, mental restlessness, dry stools, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

10. CONSTITUTIONAL WEAKNESS

Constitutional weakness in children may manifest with slow mental or speech development, early-onset asthma, early-onset myopia, thin body, poor muscle development, early-onset whooping cough, fearfulness, crying at night, etc.

a) Empty

i) Heart deficiency

Quiet child, bluish tinge on the forehead, fearful, crying at night, pale-bluish cheeks, palpitations, cold limbs. This condition may be due to the mother eating Wind-producing foods which dry out the foetus's Blood and weaken its Heart. Wind-producing foods include shrimps, prawns, crab, lobster and all shellfish, spinach and mushrooms. A constitutional Heart deficiency may also be due to the mother suffering a severe shock during pregnancy.

Acupuncture: HE-5 Tongli, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-14 Juque.

ii) Liver deficiency

Tense child, early-onset myopia and headaches, sinewy body, greenish complexion, crying, a history of convulsions in infancy, twitching during sleep, crying

at night, desire to suckle frequently, contraction of tendons, ridged nails. This condition may be due to the mother suffering an emotional upset and anger during pregnancy.

Acupuncture: LIV-8 Ququan, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

iii) Spleen deficiency

Quiet child, poor muscle development, flaccid muscles, sallow complexion, pale lips, cold limbs, poor digestion, poor appetite, crying with a low sound, loose stools, vomiting, diarrhoea. This condition may be due to the mother eating too many Phlegm-producing foods or to overworking during pregnancy.

Acupuncture: Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai.

iv) Lung deficiency

Quiet child, fearful, pale complexion, shortness of breath, crying with weak sound, moaning, weeping, cold hands, lustreless-flaccid skin, thin chest, early-onset asthma and/or eczema, Lung cracks on the tongue. This condition may be due to the mother suffering from sadness or grief during pregnancy.

Acupuncture: LU-9 Taiyuan, BL-13 Feishu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-6 Qihai.

v) Kidney deficiency

Quiet child, lassitude, thin body, slow mental and physical development, early-onset myopia, weak limbs, early-onset asthma and/or eczema, frequent urination, feeling cold, nocturnal enuresis after age 3. This condition is usually due to a Kidney-Essence deficiency of both parents.

Acupuncture: KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu.

11. CONSTIPATION IN INFANCY

i) Foetus Heat

Constipation in infancy, no desire to suckle, crying, crying at night, irritability, red face, dry lips, abdominal pain, dark urine.

ii) Constitutional weakness

Constipation in infancy, listlessness, poor appetite, easily startled, crying at night with weak sound, pale complexion.

12. RETENTION OF URINE IN INFANCY

i) Heat in the Bladder

Retention of urine, dark urine, irritability, crying, dry lips.

ii) Deficiency of original Qi

Retention of urine, quiet child, pale face, listlessness, crying with low sound, pale complexion, pale lips, slow development.

13. CRYING

i) Spleen deficient and Cold

Crying with weak sound, arching of the back, crying without tears, desire to lie down, pale-bluish complexion, abdominal pain, poor appetite, pale lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak-Slow pulse.

ii) Heart-Heat

Crying with loud sound, irritability, insomnia, crying at night, crying as soon as the light is switched on, dark urine, red face, red lips, Red tongue with yellow coating.

iii) Heart deficiency

Crying with low sound, crying at night, easily startled, pale-bluish complexion, quiet child, thin body, pale lips, Pale tongue.

iv) Shock

Crying, crying at night, grimacing, easily startled, bluish tinge on the forehead, crying when left alone, white foam from the corners of the mouth, bluish lips, clinging to the mother.

v) Retention of food

Crying with loud sound, crying after eating, crying at night, abdominal fullness and hardness, vomiting, no desire to suckle, loose stools with foul smell.

14. CRYING AT NIGHT IN BABIES

i) Spleen deficient and Cold

Crying at night with low sound, likes to lie on the stomach, goes to sleep easily but wakes up, arches back

and cries, cold limbs, poor appetite, loose stools, bright-white complexion.

ii) Heart-Heat

Crying at night with loud sound, likes to sleep on the back, difficulty in falling asleep, cries and stops when lights are turned on, irritability, dark urine, red face, red lips.

iii) Shock

Crying at night, easily frightened, fear of going to sleep, wakes up frightened during the night, bluish tinge on forehead, pale-bluish face and lips, clinging to the mother.

15. DISTURBED SLEEP

a) Full

i) Liver-Fire

Disturbed sleep, waking up during the night, excessive dreaming, nightmares, night-sweating, headaches, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi, G.B.-13 Benshen.

ii) Heart-Fire

Disturbed sleep, waking up during the night, excessive dreaming, nightmares, palpitations, thirst, agitation, feeling of heat, red face, bitter taste, Red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: HE-8 Shaofu, L.I.-11 Quchi, Du-24 Shenting, Ren-15 Jiuwei.

iii) Residual pathogenic factor (Heat)

Disturbed sleep after a febrile episode, feeling of tightness of the chest, irritability, hypochondrial pain, tongue Red in the front, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-5 Chize, Du-19 Houding.

iv) Retention of food

Disturbed sleep, excessive dreaming, night-sweating, epigastric fullness, undigested food in the stools, sour regurgitation, vomiting, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

Acupuncture: Ren-10 Xiawan, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-19 Burong, ST-8 Touwei.

v) Stomach-Heat

Disturbed sleep, excessive dreaming, night-sweating, burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, Red tongue with a yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

Acupuncture: ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-11 Quchi, Du-19 Houding.

vi) Shock

Disturbed sleep, easily frightened, fear of going to sleep, wakes up frightened during the night, bluish tinge on forehead, pale-bluish face and lips, clinging to the mother.

Acupuncture: HE-7 Shenmen, Du-24 Shenting, Ren-15 Jiuwei.

16. ACCUMULATION DISORDER

'Accumulation Disorder' is a typical children's problem characterised by retention of food and slow digestion. It is very common early in life because the Spleen and Stomach energy are always weak in small children and they get stronger as they grow up. Accumulation Disorder is equivalent to retention of food in adults and is characterised by poor digestion, abdominal fullness and pain, poor appetite, vomiting and diarrhoea. Accumulation Disorder in babies is usually due to not breast-feeding, breast-feeding for too short a time or weaning too early.

i) Stagnation of food

Babies: vomiting of curdled milk, no appetite, milky film on palate, foul-smelling stools, restlessness, whining, red cheeks.

Children: vomiting of undigested food, abdominal pain relieved by bowel movement, irritability, crying, low-grade fever, sweating at night, sallow complexion, burning sensation in the palms, thick-sticky tongue coating, Slippery pulse.

ii) Spleen-Qi deficiency with retention of food

Sallow complexion, poor digestion, poor appetite, listlessness, slight abdominal pain and fullness, loose stools, vomiting, restless sleep, sleepy in the daytime, Pale tongue with sticky coating, Weak-Slippery pulse.

17. PINWORMS

Abdominal pain that comes and goes; gurgling in the intestines; vomiting; profuse urination; itching of the anus at night; sweaty perineum; in girls vaginal itching; sallow complexion; thin body; poor appetite; desire to eat strange objects such as soil, raw rice, tea leaves or paper; white spots on the face; small, grey spots in the eyes; small spots under the lips; red points on the tongue.

18. ROUNDWORMS

Abdominal pain, vomiting, listlessness, thin body, sallow complexion, white spots on the face, small grey spots in the eyes, dark under the eyes, itchy nose, small spots below the lips, red points on the tongue, desire to eat strange objects, constipation or loose stools, abdominal distension.

19. NOCTURNAL ENURESIS

Urination in bed at night in children constitutes 'nocturnal enuresis' only in children over 3.

i) Kidney-Yang deficiency

Nocturnal enuresis, quiet child, feeling cold, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

In children, this is usually a constitutional Kidney-Yang deficiency, and due to their age, there will not be many Kidney-deficiency symptoms. Indeed, if a child suffers from nocturnal enuresis and the tongue is Pale and the Kidney pulse is Weak, these signs are enough to diagnose a constitutional Kidney-Yang deficiency. This child will usually be a quiet, shy child without much energy.

ii) Liver-Fire

Nocturnal enuresis, tense and highly strung child, headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, red face, thirst, bitter taste, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with redder sides and dry-yellow coating, Wiry-Rapid pulse.

iii) Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency

Nocturnal enuresis, tiredness, poor appetite, loose stools, poor digestion, chronic weak cough, weak voice, sweating, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

**CLINICAL NOTE**

Remember: Nocturnal enuresis is not always due to a constitutional Kidney deficiency. In a tense, nervous child with a Red tongue, think of Liver-Fire as a possible cause. If so, use HE-7 Shenmen and LIV-2 Xingjian.

20. FIVE FLACCIDITIES

'Five Flaccidities' is called *wu ruan* in Chinese, which literally means 'five softnesses': these are flaccidity of head and neck (cannot keep head up), flaccidity of mouth (dribbling and difficulty in chewing), flaccidity of arms (cannot hold objects), flaccidity of legs (cannot stand up) and flaccidity of muscles.

i) Constitutional Kidney deficiency

Five Flaccidities, cannot hold head up or straight, head leaning to one side, difficulty in walking, mental retardation, cannot stand up, frequent urination, cannot grasp objects, pale lips, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

ii) Constitutional Spleen deficiency

Five Flaccidities, especially flaccid muscles, poor digestion, poor appetite, listlessness, sleepiness, cannot grasp objects, difficulty in speaking, mouth open, slow development, difficulty in walking, mental retardation, sallow complexion, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

21. FIVE RETARDATIONS

The 'Five Retardations' indicate late development in children in standing, walking, tooth development, growth of hair and speech. The slow development is due to a combination of prenatal and postnatal deficiencies. The Five Retardations are called *wu chi* in Chinese. The organs involved in the pathology of the Five Retardations are Kidneys (late in being able to stand, slow teeth and hair development), Liver (late in being able to stand and walk), Heart (slow in speech development) and Stomach (late in being able to walk).

i) Cold Foetus

Five Retardations, feeling cold, cold body, cold limbs, lying stiff, pale-bluish complexion, shortness of breath,

crying with low sound, difficulty in suckling, pale lips, Pale and wet tongue, Deep-Slow pulse.

ii) Liver- and Spleen deficiency

Five Retardations, poor appetite, abdominal distension, blue veins in the abdomen, flaccid muscles, pale-greenish complexion, Pale tongue, Weak pulse.

22. ACUTE SKIN RASH

i) Wind-Heat at Defensive-Qi level

Acute skin rash that starts on the head and then spreads rapidly to the trunk and finally the limbs, red papules, low fever, itching, swelling behind the ears, swollen tonsils, cough, sneezing, yellow nasal discharge, sore throat, red eyes, tongue Red in the front and/or sides with red points, Floating-Rapid pulse.

ii) Heat at the Qi level

Acute rash, high fever, red papules with dense distribution, intense thirst, sweating, mental restlessness, dry stools, dark urine, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing pulse.

23. ERYSIPELAS

i) Toxic Heat on the Exterior

Erysipelas, fever, sticky discharge in the corner of the eyes, convulsions, crying, bright-red macular rash, hardened skin that is hot and painful to touch, restlessness, Red tongue with red points and with yellow coating.

ii) Toxic Heat in the Interior

Erysipelas, high fever at night, mental restlessness, crying, dry mouth, feeling of fullness of the chest, delirium, fainting, coarse breathing, blurred vision, dull dark-red or purple macular rash, skin hot and painful to touch, Red tongue with red points and without coating.

24. JAUNDICE

i) Damp-Heat

Jaundice, bright-yellow skin, bright-yellow eyes like tangerine peel, sweating, dark urine, fever, thirst,

abdominal fullness and distension, pale stools, listlessness, poor appetite, sticky-yellow tongue coating.

ii) Cold-Dampness

Jaundice, dull-yellow skin, dull-yellow eyes, listlessness, a desire to lie down, poor appetite, abdominal fullness and distension, pale stools, loose stools, pale urine, sticky-white tongue coating.

25. CHICKENPOX

i) Wind-Heat at the Defensive-Qi level

Chickenpox, vesicles like dew filled with clear fluid, headache, fever, runny nose with white discharge, cough, sneezing, tongue Red on the sides or front with white coating, Floating-Rapid pulse.

ii) Toxic Heat

Chickenpox; dull-coloured vesicles which are red around the edge, filled with a turbid fluid and with dense distribution; fever; mental restlessness; thirst; red face; red lips; tongue ulcers; dark urine; Red tongue with thick-dry-yellow coating and red points; Deep-Rapid pulse.

26. FLAPPING NOSTRILS

i) Wind-Heat in the Lung Defensive-Qi portion

Flapping nostrils, sore throat, cough, fever, shivers, slight thirst, slight sweating, tongue Red on the sides or front with white coating, Floating-Rapid pulse.

ii) Phlegm-Heat in the Lungs

Flapping nostrils; barking cough with profuse, sticky-yellow or green sputum; shortness of breath; wheezing; a feeling of oppression of the chest; a feeling of heat; thirst; Red and Swollen tongue with a sticky-yellow coating; Slippery-Rapid pulse.

iii) Lung and Kidney deficiency

Flapping nostrils, shortness of breath, shallow breathing, dull-pale complexion, listlessness, sweating, cold limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

27. MUMPS

i) Invasion of Wind-Heat

Mumps, fever, shivers, headache, cough, sore throat, pain, redness and swelling behind the ears, tongue Red on the sides and/or front with red points, Floating-Rapid pulse.

ii) Toxic Heat at the Qi level

Mumps, high fever, feeling of heat, irritability, headache, thirst, red lips, vomiting, swelling, redness, pain and hardness behind the ears, sore throat, swollen tonsils, constipation, dark urine, Red tongue with thick-yellow coating and red points, Deep-Full-Slippery pulse.

28. ACUTE CONVULSIONS

Old paediatric books mention eight characteristics of 'acute convulsions', i.e. twitching of limbs, open hands, pulling of the head towards the shoulder, tremor of limbs, arching of body, stretching of hands, eyes turning up and blurred vision.

i) Invasion of Wind with penetration of Heat at the Qi level

Acute convulsions, tremor of limbs, high fever, sweating, headache, cough, red face, irritability, mental confusion, delirium, dark urine, constipation, abdominal fullness and pain, Red tongue with yellow coating and red spots, Deep-Full pulse.

ii) Phlegm-Heat

Acute convulsions, fever, hot body, red face, irritability, thirst, cough with expectoration of yellow sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, clenching of teeth, dark urine, dry stools, Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

iii) Retention of food

Acute convulsions, sallow complexion, vomiting, abdominal fullness and pain, constipation, foul breath, rattling sound in the throat, thick-sticky-yellow tongue coating, Slippery-Rapid pulse.

iv) Shock

Acute convulsions, no fever, bluish complexion, cold hands, easily startled, insomnia or sleepiness with

difficulty in being aroused and crying after waking up, crying at night, Moving pulse.

29. CHRONIC CONVULSIONS

i) Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat

Chronic convulsions, slight tremor of limbs which comes and goes, thin body, malar flush, mental restlessness, insomnia, 5-palm heat, night-sweating, Red tongue without coating, Floating-Empty and Rapid pulse.

ii) Stomach- and Spleen-Yang deficiency

Chronic convulsions, eyes turning up, sleepiness, wet glazed eyes, mental confusion, listlessness, sallow complexion, cold limbs, loose stools, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

iii) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Chronic convulsions, slight tremor of limbs which comes and goes, listlessness, sleepiness, sallow complexion, sunken fontanelle, sweating, cold limbs, loose stools, weak breathing, Pale tongue, Deep-Weak pulse.

30. FOETUS TOXIN

According to Chinese medicine, most fetuses absorb toxin in the uterus and develop Toxic Heat; this is all the more likely to happen when the mother eats too many hot-spicy foods, suffers an invasion of Toxic Heat or has a shock during pregnancy.

i) Foetus-Toxin Heat

Fever, hot body, red face and eyes, mouth closed, noisy breathing, swollen eyes, shortness of breath, crying, easily startles, dark urine, dry stools.

ii) Foetus-Toxin Cold

Pale face, mental confusion, sleepiness, shortness of breath, cold body, cold limbs, abdominal pain, crying, mouth open.

iii) Foetus-Toxin convulsions

Convulsions, body hot, face bluish, clenched teeth, shortness of breath, wheezing, stiffness of body, eyes turning up, grimacing.

iv) Foetus-Toxin jaundice

Jaundice, golden-yellow skin and eyes, body hot, dark urine, crying.

31. SUNKEN FONTANELLES

i) Spleen- and Kidney-Yang deficiency

Sunken fontanelle, late closure of fontanelle, quiet child, cold limbs, listlessness, poor appetite.

ii) Exhaustion of Qi and Fluids

Sunken fontanelle, dry skin, listlessness, crying at night.

32. RAISED FONTANELLES

i) Toxic Heat

Raised and swollen fontanelle like a heap, soft to touch, red skin over the fontanelle, headache, thirst, crying, sweating, red face and lips, shortness of breath, dark urine, Red tongue with red points and dry-thick-yellow coating, Rapid-Overflowing pulse.

ii) Cold in the Interior

Raised fontanelle hard to touch, white skin over fontanelle, dull-pale complexion, cold limbs, possibly twitching of limbs, Pale tongue, Deep-Tight pulse.

33. LATE CLOSURE OF FONTANELLES

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 5](#)

The posterior fontanelle usually closes about 2 months after birth; the sphenoid fontanelle closes at about 3 months, the mastoid one closes near the end of the first year, and the anterior fontanelle may not close completely until the middle or end of the second year.

i) Kidney-Essence deficiency

Late closure of fontanelle, listlessness, weak and quiet child, slow mental and physical development.

ii) Spleen deficiency

Late closure of fontanelle, listlessness, poor digestion, poor appetite, quiet child, loose stools.

34. WHITE SPOTS ON THE PALATE AND TONGUE

i) Heat in Spleen and Heart

White spots on the palate and tongue like snow, red face, red lips, thirst, irritability, insomnia, crying, palpitations, dark urine, Red tongue with yellow coating, Overflowing-Rapid pulse.

ii) Spleen- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

White spots on palate and tongue like snow, listlessness, poor development, malar flush, dry mouth, tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

35. LONG PENIS

Part 1 Observation, [Chapter 17](#)

i) Congenital Kidney-Yin deficiency

Long penis, slow development, late in walking and standing, slow growth of teeth, normal-coloured tongue without coating, Floating-Empty pulse.

ii) Spleen-Qi sinking

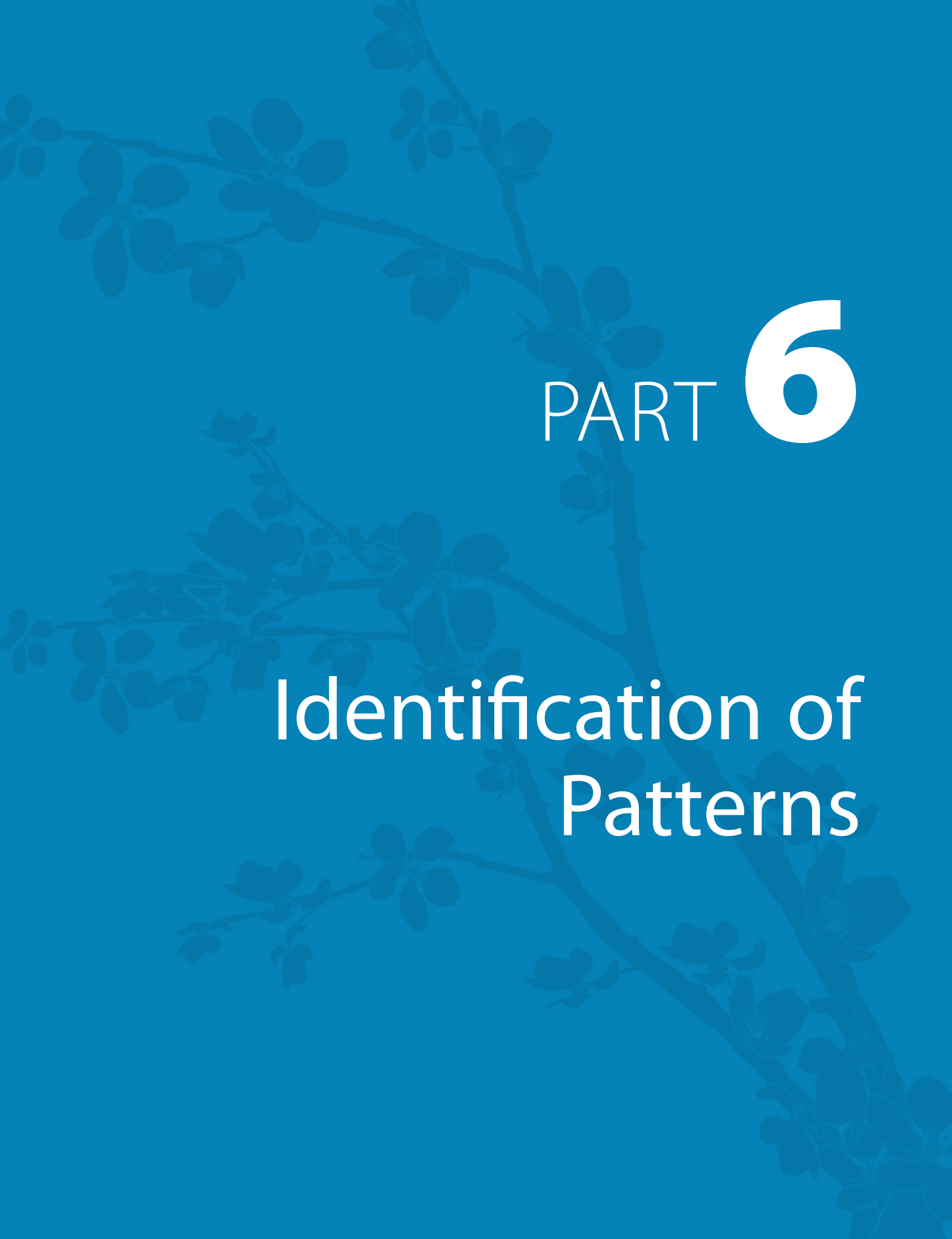
Long penis, feeling of bearing down in the abdomen, tiredness, lassitude, poor appetite, loose stools, failure to thrive, Pale tongue, Empty pulse.

iii) Phlegm and Blood stasis in the Lower Burner

Long penis, sputum in the throat, slow mental and speech development, feeling of oppression of the throat, abdominal pain, Purple and Swollen tongue, Wiry-Slippery pulse.

iv) Damp-Heat in the Liver channel

Long penis; fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium; bitter taste; poor appetite; nausea; feeling of heaviness of the body; pain; redness and swelling of the scrotum; genital, papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching; urinary difficulty; burning on urination; dark urine; Red tongue with redder sides and a sticky-yellow coating; Slippery-Wiry-Rapid pulse.



PART 6

Identification of Patterns

INTRODUCTION

'Identification of patterns' indicates the process of identifying the basic disharmony that underlies all clinical manifestations. This is the essence of Chinese medical diagnosis and pathology. By considering the picture that is formed by all the symptoms and signs, we discern and identify the underlying pattern of disharmony.

Identification of patterns thus involves forming an overall picture of disharmony taking all symptoms and signs into consideration. In this respect, Chinese medicine does not look for causes but rather searches for patterns. When we say that a patient presents with the pattern of disharmony of Kidney-Yin deficiency, this is not the cause of the disease (which has to be looked for in the person's life), but the disharmony underlying the disease. Of course, in other respects, after identifying the pattern, Chinese medicine does go a step further in trying to identify a cause for the disharmony.

In the context of identification of patterns, 'symptoms' and 'signs' should be interpreted in a broad way. Included among them are manifestations that are not 'symptoms' or 'signs' in Western medicine – for example, timidity, a weak voice, incapacity of making decisions, lack of thirst, etc.

In identifying patterns, we follow the typical Chinese medical philosophy of looking for relationships rather than linear causes. Each symptom or sign has a meaning only in relation to all other manifestations; therefore, a particular symptom can mean different things in different situations. For example, the sign of 'dry hair' accompanied by night-sweating, a feeling of heat in the evening, a dry throat at night and a Red tongue without coating indicates Yin deficiency, whereas 'dry hair' accompanied by blurred vision, scanty periods and a Pale tongue indicates Blood deficiency.

Identifying the pattern of disharmony blends diagnosis, pathology and treatment principles all in one. When we say that a certain pattern is characterized by Spleen-Yang deficiency with retention of Dampness, we are defining the nature of the condition (Yang deficiency), the site (Spleen) and, by implication, the treatment principle – tonify and warm the Spleen and resolve Dampness.

In the particular case of external invasions, by identifying the pattern, we identify the cause of the disharmony (e.g. external Wind), the nature of the condition (invasion of Wind), the site (the Exterior of

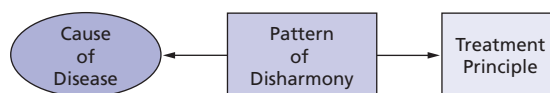


Figure 6.1. Relationship between the cause of a disease, the pattern of disharmony and the treatment principle.

the body) and the treatment principle – release the Exterior and expel Wind. Thus, identifying the pattern (or patterns) allows us to identify the nature and character of the condition, the site of the disease, the treatment principle and the prognosis (Fig. 6.1).

When identifying patterns, we should not only identify the pattern but also understand how it arose and how different aspects of it interact with each other. For example, if we identify a pattern of Liver-Qi stagnation and also a pattern of Spleen-Qi deficiency, we should go a step further and find out which pattern started first, how the two patterns interact, which is primary and whether one can be considered the cause of the other.

Patterns may be identified according to different aspects. These are applicable in different situations and were formulated at different times in the development of Chinese medicine. The various modes of identifying patterns are:

- Identification of patterns according to Internal Organs
- Identification of patterns according to Qi, Blood and Body Fluids
- Identification of patterns according to Pathogenic Factors
- Identification of patterns according to the Four Levels
- Identification of patterns according to the Six Stages
- Identification of patterns according to the Three Burners
- Identification of patterns according to the Eight Principles
- Identification of patterns according to the channels
- Identification of patterns according to the Five Elements

Each of these methods is applicable in different cases. In this book I present only the Identification of Patterns according to the Internal Organs. I report these patterns primarily as a cross-reference with the Symptoms and Signs in Part 5. I have done this so the reader does not have to refer to a different book to look up an Internal Organ pattern mentioned in Part 5.

The Internal Organs patterns are dealt with in much more detail in my *Foundations of Chinese Medicine*, Third Edition.

IDENTIFICATION OF PATTERNS ACCORDING TO INTERNAL ORGANS

The identification of patterns according to the Internal Organs is based on the clinical manifestations arising when the Qi and Blood of the Internal Organs are out of balance. This method of identification is used mostly for interior and chronic conditions, but it also includes a few exterior and acute conditions.

The Internal Organs patterns are an application of the Eight Principles method of identification to the particular disharmonies of specific Internal Organs. For example, according to the Eight Principles pattern identification, the symptoms and signs of Qi deficiency are shortness of breath, a weak voice, a pale face, tiredness and poor appetite.

Although useful to diagnose a condition of Qi deficiency, this is not detailed enough and does not identify the organ involved. It is therefore too general to give an indication of the treatment needed. According to the Internal Organs pattern identification, the above symptoms can be further classified as Lung-Qi deficiency (shortness of breath and a weak voice) and Spleen-Qi deficiency (tiredness and poor appetite). This is more useful in clinical practice because it gives an indication as to which organ needs to be treated.

CHARACTERISTICS AND POINTS OF ATTENTION IN IDENTIFICATION OF PATTERNS ACCORDING TO THE INTERNAL ORGANS

1. In the following pages, the Internal Organs are described in as much detail as possible. It is important to remember, however, that not all symptoms and signs listed need to be present to diagnose those patterns. The patterns listed actually describe advanced cases of Internal Organs patterns. Therefore, a case develops gradually over several years, and in the beginning stages there will be relatively few symptoms and signs. Sometimes, just a few symptoms are enough to diagnose a certain pattern. For example, scanty periods and blurred vision in a woman may be enough to diagnose Liver-Blood deficiency; this is also the case if she suffers from blurred vision and her tongue is Pale on the sides.

2. It should not be forgotten that the pulse is a sign that is part of the constellation of symptoms and signs forming a pattern. Indeed, the pulse is a very important sign, and one can sometimes diagnose a pattern simply on the basis of the pulse. For example, if the Kidney pulse on both left and right positions is *consistently Weak*, I interpret that as a sign of a Kidney deficiency even in the absence of any other symptom and sign.
3. Within the Yin-deficiency patterns, I list two separate patterns – that is, a pattern of Yin deficiency without Empty Heat and a pattern of Yin deficiency with Empty Heat. Although Empty Heat does eventually arise from Yin deficiency, in the beginning stages there is usually Yin deficiency without Empty Heat. Besides the symptoms of Heat, the tongue is an important sign indicating whether there is Empty Heat: if it is Red (without coating), it indicates that there is Empty Heat; if it is without coating (but is not Red), it indicates Yin deficiency without Empty Heat. In other words, it is important to remember that the Yin deficiency on the tongue is indicated by the lack of coating (*not* its redness) and Empty Heat is indicated by its redness (of course associated with lack of coating).
4. The organ patterns are not ‘pigeon holes’ into which we fit symptoms and signs. In practice, it is essential to understand the aetiology, pathology and interaction of patterns. The aim of the identification of patterns according to Internal Organs, therefore, is to understand how symptoms and signs arose and how they interact with each other.

There is absolutely no direct correspondence between Internal Organs patterns and Western diseases. Each Western disease may manifest with many different patterns, and each pattern may give rise to various Western diseases.

Furthermore, there is no direct correspondence between an organ pattern in Chinese medicine and an organ disease in Western medicine. For example, a person may suffer from Kidney-Yin deficiency without any sign of kidney disease in Western medicine; vice versa, a person may suffer from a kidney inflammation from a Western point of view but a pattern of Bladder Damp-Heat from the perspective of Chinese medicine.

5. Most patients suffer from a combination of Internal Organs patterns. The most frequent ones are:
 - a) Two or more patterns from the same organs, either Yin or Yang (e.g. Liver-Qi stagnation with

- Liver-Yang rising and Stomach-Yin deficiency with rebellious Stomach-Qi)
- b) Two or more patterns from different organs, either Yin or Yang (e.g. Liver-Fire and Heart-Fire, and Stomach-Heat with Gall-Bladder Damp-Heat)
 - c) One or more patterns of a Yin organ with one or more of a Yang organ (e.g. Spleen-Qi deficiency with Bladder Damp-Heat)
 - d) An interior with an exterior pattern (e.g. Damp-Phlegm in the Lungs with invasion of exterior Wind in the Lung's Defensive-Qi portion)
 - e) An organ pattern with a channel pattern of the related channel (e.g. Dampness in the Large Intestine with Painful Obstruction Syndrome of the Large Intestine channel)
 - f) An organ pattern with a channel pattern of an unrelated channel (e.g. Lung-Qi deficiency with Stagnation of Qi in the Bladder channel)
- Part 6 will be articulated into the following chapters:

[Chapter 91: Heart Patterns](#)
[Chapter 92: Spleen Patterns](#)
[Chapter 93: Liver Patterns](#)
[Chapter 94: Lung Patterns](#)
[Chapter 95: Kidney Patterns](#)
[Chapter 96: Small Intestine Patterns](#)
[Chapter 97: Stomach Patterns](#)
[Chapter 98: Gall-Bladder Patterns](#)
[Chapter 99: Large Intestine Patterns](#)
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Heart Patterns 91

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Heart-Qi deficiency
 Heart-Yang deficiency
 Heart-Yang Collapse
 Heart-Blood deficiency
 Heart-Qi and Heart-Blood deficiency
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 Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
 Heart-Qi and Heart-Yin deficiency
 Deficiency of both Heart-Yang and Heart-Yin
 Heart-Yang deficiency with Phlegm
 Heart-Qi stagnation
 Heart-Fire blazing
 Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart
 Phlegm misting the Mind
 Heart-Blood stasis
 Heart-Vessel obstruction
 Water overflowing to the Heart
 Turbid Dampness surrounding the Heart
 Combined patterns

The Heart patterns are:

1. Heart-Qi deficiency
2. Heart-Yang deficiency
3. Heart-Yang Collapse
4. Heart-Blood deficiency
5. Heart-Qi and Heart-Blood deficiency
6. Heart-Yin deficiency
7. Heart-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
8. Heart-Qi and Heart-Yin deficiency
9. Deficiency of both Heart-Yang and Heart-Yin
10. Heart-Yang deficiency with Phlegm
11. Heart-Qi stagnation
12. Heart-Fire blazing
13. Phlegm-Fire harassing the Heart
14. Phlegm misting the Mind
15. Heart-Blood stasis

16. Heart-Vessel obstruction
17. Water overflowing to the Heart
18. Turbid Dampness surrounding the Heart
19. Combined patterns
 - Heart- and Liver-Blood deficiency (see under Liver Combined Patterns)
 - Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency (see under Spleen Combined Patterns)
 - Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency (see 'Heart and Kidneys not Harmonized' under Kidney Combined Patterns)
 - Heart- and Lung-Qi deficiency (see under Lung Combined Patterns)

1. HEART-QI DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, pale face, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, P-6 Neiguan, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-17 Shanzhong, Ren-6 Qihai.

iii) Prescription

Bao Yuan Tang *Preserving the Source Decoction*.

2. HEART-YANG DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, tiredness, slight depression, spontaneous sweating, a slight feeling of discomfort or stuffiness in the Heart region,

feeling cold, cold hands, bright-pale face, slightly dark lips.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Deep-Weak, in severe cases Knotted.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, P-6 Neiguan, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-17 Shanzhong, Ren-6 Qihai, Du-14 Dazhui.

iii) Prescription

Rou Fu Bao Yuan Tang *Cinnamomum-Aconitum Preserving the Source Decoction*.

3. HEART-YANG COLLAPSE

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, shortness of breath, weak and shallow breathing, profuse sweating, cold limbs, cyanosis of lips, greyish-white complexion, in severe cases coma.

Tongue: very Pale or Bluish-Purple, Short.

Pulse: Hidden-Minute.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-8 Shenque, Du-4 Mingmen, ST-36 Zusanli, P-6 Neiguan, BL-23 Shenshu, Du-20 Baihui, Du-14 Dazhui, BL-15 Xinshu. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Shen Fu Tang *Ginseng-Aconitum Decoction*.

4. HEART-BLOOD DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips.

Tongue: Pale and Thin.

Pulse: Choppy or Fine.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-14 Jueque, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-17 Geshu (with moxa), BL-20 Pishu.

iii) Prescription

Shen Qi Si Wu Tang *Ginseng-Astragalus Four Substances Decoction*.

5. HEART-QI AND HEART-BLOOD DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, shortness of breath, spontaneous sweating, depression, anxiety, tiredness, dull-pale complexion, insomnia.

Tongue: Pale and Thin.

Pulse: Weak or Choppy.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, HE-7 Shenmen, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-14 Jueque, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-17 Geshu (with moxa), BL-20 Pishu, BL-15 Xinshu.

iii) Prescription

Ba Zhen Tang *Eight Precious Decoction*.

Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*.

6. HEART-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, dry mouth and throat in the afternoon or evening.

Tongue: normal coloured without coating or with rootless coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty, especially in the left-Front position.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-14 Jueque, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Ren-4 Guanyuan, HE-6 Yinxi, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-7 Fuliu, KI-6 Zhaohai.

iii) Prescription

Tian Wang Bu Xin Dan *Heavenly Emperor Tonifying the Heart Pill*.

7. HEART-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH EMPTY HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, mental restlessness, uneasiness, 'feeling hot and bothered', dry mouth and throat in the evening, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, night-sweating, five-palm heat.

Tongue: Red, redder on the tip, without coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty, especially on the left-Front position and Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-14 Jueque, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Ren-4 Guanyuan, HE-6 Yinxi, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-7 Fuli, KI-6 Zhaohai, P-7 Daling, L.I.-11 Quchi, HE-9 Shaoshao.

iii) Prescription

Tian Wang Bu Xin Dan *Heavenly Emperor Tonifying the Heart Pill* plus Mu Dan Pi Cortex Moutan radices.

8. HEART-QI AND HEART-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, anxiety, propensity to be easily startled, slight breathlessness, tiredness, insomnia, mental restlessness, sweating on exertion, dry throat, night-sweating.

Tongue: normal-coloured without coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, HE-7 Shenmen, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-14 Jueque, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Ren-4 Guanyuan, HE-6 Yinxi, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-15 Xinshu.

iii) Prescription

Zhi Gan Cao Tang *Glycyrrhiza Decoction*.
Sheng Mai San *Generating the Pulse Powder*.

9. DEFICIENCY OF BOTH HEART-YANG AND HEART-YIN

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, propensity to be easily startled, shortness of breath, a slight feeling of oppression of the chest, feeling cold, cold limbs, mental restlessness, night-sweating, poor memory, malar flush.

Tongue: Pale or Red without coating, depending on whether Yang or Yin deficiency predominates.

Pulse: Weak or Floating-Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-17 Shanzhong, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-15 Jiuwei, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli.

iii) Prescription

Zhi Gan Cao Tang *Glycyrrhiza Decoction*.

10. HEART-YANG DEFICIENCY WITH PHLEGM

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, a feeling of oppression of the chest, sputum in the throat, dizziness, tiredness, cold hands, numbness of the limbs, oedema of the hands, muzziness (fuzziness) of the head, poor memory, a feeling of heaviness, depression.

Tongue: Pale, wet and Swollen.

Pulse: Weak but slightly Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-8 Shenque, Du-4 Mingmen, ST-36 Zusanli, P-6 Neiguan, BL-23 Shenshu, Du-14 Dazhui, BL-15 Xinshu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, P-5 Jianshi, Ren-17 Shanzhong.

iii) Prescription

Ling Gui Zhu Gan Tang *Poria-Ramulus Cinnamomi-Atractylodes-Glycyrrhiza Decoction* plus Yi Yi Ren Semen *Coicis lachryma jobi*.

11. HEART-QI STAGNATION

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, a feeling of distension or oppression of the chest, depression, a slight feeling of a lump in the throat, slight shortness of breath, sighing, poor appetite, chest and upper epigastric distension, dislike of lying down, weak and cold limbs, slightly purple lips, pale complexion.

Tongue: slightly Pale-Purple on the sides in the chest area.

Pulse: Empty but very slightly Overflowing on the left-Front position.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, HE-7 Shenmen, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Ren-17 Shanzhong, LU-7 Lieque, ST-40 Fenglong, L.I.-4 Hegu.

iii) Prescription

Mu Xiang Liu Qi Yin *Aucklandia Flowing Qi Decoction*.
Ban Xia Hou Po Tang *Pinellia-Magnolia Decoction*.

12. HEART-FIRE BLAZING

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, thirst, mouth and tongue ulcers, mental restlessness, feeling agitated, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, feeling of heat, red face, dark urine or blood in the urine, bitter taste (after a bad night's sleep).

Tongue: Red with redder tip and yellow coating. In more severe cases, the tip could also be swollen.

Pulse: Overflowing-Rapid, especially on the left-Front position. It could also be Hasty (rapid and stopping at irregular intervals).

ii) Acupuncture

HE-9 Shaochong, HE-8 Shaofu, HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-15 Jiuwei, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-6 Zhaohai, L.I.-11 Quchi, Du-24 Shenting, Du-19 Houding.

iii) Prescription

Xie Xin Tang *Draining the Heart Decoction*.

13. PHLEGM-FIRE HARASSING THE HEART

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, mental restlessness, thirst, red face, a feeling of oppression of the chest, dark urine, expectoration of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, bitter taste, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, agitation, mental confusion, incoherent speech, rash behaviour, tendency to hit or scold people, uncontrolled laughter or crying, shouting, muttering to oneself, depression, manic behaviour.

Tongue: Red with redder and swollen tip and a sticky-yellow coating. In severe cases, there will be a deep Heart crack with a sticky-dry yellow coating inside it.

Pulse: Slippery-Rapid or Slippery-Overflowing-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

P-5 Jianshi, HE-7 Shenmen, HE-8 Shaofu, HE-9 Shaochong, P-7 Daling, Ren-15 Jiuwei, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, Du-20 Baihui, G.B.-13 Benshen, G.B.-17 Zhengying, Du-24 Shenting.

iii) Prescription

Wen Dan Tang *Warming the Gall-Bladder Decoction*.

14. PHLEGM MISTING THE MIND

i) Clinical manifestations

Mental confusion, lethargic stupor, unconsciousness, incoherent speech, vomiting of phlegm, rattling sound in the throat, aphasia, mental depression, emotional lability, very dull eyes.

Tongue: Swollen with sticky coating.

Pulse: Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-9 Shaochong, P-5 Jianshi, BL-15 Xinshu, ST-40 Fenglong, Du-26 Renzhong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, Du-20 Baihui, Du-14 Dazhui.

iii) Prescription

Di Tan Tang *Scouring Phlegm Decoction*.
Gun Tan Wan *Vapourizing Phlegm Pill*.

15. HEART-BLOOD STASIS

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, stabbing or pricking chest pain which may radiate to the inner aspect of the left arm or to the shoulder, a feeling of oppression or constriction of the chest, cyanosis of lips and nails, cold hands.

Tongue: Purple in its entirety or only on the sides in the chest area.

Pulse: Choppy, Wiry or Knotted. The pulse will be Knotted if Heart-Blood stasis occurs against a background of severe Heart-Yang deficiency.

ii) Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, P-4 Ximen, HE-7 Shenmen, Ren-17 Shanzhong, BL-14 Jueyinshu, BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai, KI-25 Shencang.

iii) Prescription

Xue Fu Zhu Yu Tang *Blood-Mansion Eliminating Stasis Decoction*.

16. HEART-VESSEL OBSTRUCTION

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations; shortness of breath with inability to lie down; depression; mental restlessness; a feeling of stuffiness under the hypochondrium; a flustered feeling; a feeling of oppression of the chest; stabbing or pricking pain in the Heart region which comes and goes and which may radiate to the upper back or shoulder; pain aggravated by exposure to cold and alleviated by heat; expectoration of phlegm; epigastric or hypochondrial distension; a feeling of heaviness; dislike to speak; cold hands; sighing; purple lips, face and nails.

Tongue: Purple on the sides in the chest area, Swollen with a sticky coating.

Pulse: Wiry, Choppy or Knotted. It could also be Slippery if Phlegm is predominant.

This is a complex pattern due to Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Cold and Phlegm occurring simultaneously.

ii) Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, LU-7 Lieque, P-5 Jianshi, Ren-17 Shanzhong, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-12

Zhongwan, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Ren-14 Juque, BL-17 Geshu, BL-14 Jueyinshu, Du-14 Dazhui (with moxa).

iii) Prescription

Zhi Shi Gua Lou Gui Zhi Tang *Citrus-Trichosantes-Ramulus Cinnamomi Decoction* plus Dan Shen *Radix Salviae miltiorrhizae*.

17. WATER OVERFLOWING TO THE HEART

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, dizziness, nausea, vomiting of white-watery-frothy fluid, feeling cold, cold limbs, severe shortness of breath, a feeling of fullness and stuffiness of the chest and epigastrium, thirst with no desire to drink, urinary retention.

Tongue: Pale, Swollen and wet.

Pulse: Deep-Wiry or Deep-Fine-Slippery. This pattern is seen only in the elderly.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, HE-6 Yinxi, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, KI-7 Fulu, Ren-17 Shanzhong. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Ling Gui Zhu Gan Tang *Poria-Ramulus Cinnamomi-Atractylodes-Glycyrrhiza Decoction*.
Zhen Wu Tang *True Warrior Decoction*.

18. TURBID DAMPNES SURROUNDING THE HEART

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, cold hands, scanty urination, oedema of the ankles, sleepiness, mental confusion, sallow complexion, dizziness, frontal headache, blurred vision, nausea, vomiting, a feeling of oppression of the chest, poor appetite, abdominal fullness, loose stools, excessive salivation.

Tongue: Pale, Swollen with white-sticky coating.

Pulse: Soggy or Deep-Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-5 Tongli, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-17 Shanzhong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-28 Shuidao, SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Wen Pi Tang *Warming the Spleen Decoction* plus Su He Xiang Wan *Styrax Pill*.

- Heart- and Spleen-Blood deficiency (see under Spleen Combined Patterns)
- Heart- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty Heat (see 'Heart and Kidneys not Harmonized' under Kidney Combined Patterns)
- Heart- and Lung-Qi deficiency (see under Lung Combined Patterns)

19. COMBINED PATTERNS

The Heart combined patterns are:

- Heart- and Liver-Blood deficiency (see under Liver Combined Patterns)

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The Spleen patterns are:

1. Spleen-Qi deficiency
2. Spleen-Yang deficiency
3. Spleen-Blood deficiency
4. Spleen-Qi sinking
5. Spleen not controlling Blood
6. Spleen-Yin deficiency
7. Spleen-Yin Deficiency with Empty Heat
8. Cold-Dampness in the Spleen
9. Damp-Heat in the Spleen
10. Spleen-Heat
11. Spleen-Qi deficiency with Dampness

12. Spleen-Qi deficiency with Phlegm
13. Phlegm obstructing the Middle Burner
14. Yin Fire from deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen and original Qi
15. Combined Patterns
 - a) Spleen- and Stomach-Qi deficiency
 - b) Spleen- and Heart-Blood deficiency
 - c) Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency
 - d) Spleen- and Liver-Blood deficiency
 - e) Obstruction of the Spleen by Dampness with stagnation of Liver-Qi (Spleen insulting the Liver)

1. SPLEEN-QI DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, tendency to obesity.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu.

iii) Prescription

Si Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Prosperous Earth (variation of Liu Jun Zi Tang).

2. SPLEEN-YANG DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the

limbs, loose stools, tendency to obesity, feeling cold, cold limbs, oedema.

Tongue: Pale and wet.

Pulse: Deep-Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu. In case of oedema: SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-9 Shuifen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Ren-11 Jianli, ST-22 Guanmen. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Li Zhong Tang *Regulating the Centre Decoction*.

3. SPLEEN-BLOOD DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, dull-pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, depression, thin body, scanty periods or amenorrhoea, insomnia.

Tongue: Pale and Thin.

Pulse: Choppy or Fine.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-17 Geshu (with direct moxa).

iii) Prescription

Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Calm the Shen (variation of Gui Pi Tang).

Precious Sea (variation of Ba Zhen Tang).

4. SPLEEN-QI SINKING

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite; slight abdominal distension after eating; tiredness; lassitude; pale complexion; weakness of the limbs; loose stools; tendency to obesity; a bearing-

down sensation in the abdomen; prolapse of stomach, uterus, anus or bladder; frequency and urgency of urination.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, Du-20 Baihui, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-21 Liangmen, Du-1 Chengqiang. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang *Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Tonify Qi and Ease the Muscles (variation of Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang).

5. SPLEEN NOT CONTROLLING BLOOD

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, depression, tendency to obesity, blood spots under the skin, blood in the urine or stools, excessive menstrual bleeding, sallow complexion.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Weak or Fine.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, Du-20 Baihui, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai, SP-1 Yinbai.

iii) Prescription

Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Calm the Shen (variation of Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*).

6. SPLEEN-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth, dry lips, dry stools, thin body, night-sweating, sallowness with possibly red tip of the nose.

Tongue: without coating, transversal cracks on the sides.

Pulse: Weak or Floating-Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Ma Zi Ren Wan Cannabis Pill.

Wu Ren Wan Five-Seed Pill.

Shen Ling Bai Zhu San Ginseng-Poria-Atractylodes Powder

iv) Three Treasures

Central Mansion (Variation of Shen Ling Bai Zhu San Ginseng-Poria-Atractylodes Powder).

7. SPLEEN-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH EMPTY HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, poor digestion, retching, gnawing hunger, loss of taste, slight epigastric pain, dry mouth, dry lips, dry stools, thin body, sallowness with possibly red tip of the nose, malar flush, a feeling of heat in the evening, night-sweating.

Tongue: Red without coating, transversal cracks on the sides.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Ma Zi Ren Wan Cannabis Pill.

Wu Ren Wan Five-Seed Pill.

Shen Ling Bai Zhu San Ginseng-Poria-Atractylodes Powder.

Plus (for any of these prescriptions): Zhi Mu Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis.

8. COLD-DAMPNESS IN THE SPLEEN

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, a feeling of fullness of the epigastrium and/or abdomen, a feeling of cold in the epigastrium which improves with the application of heat, a feeling of heaviness of the head and body, a sweetish taste or absence of taste, no thirst, loose stools, tiredness, nausea, oedema, dull-white complexion, excessive white vaginal discharge.

Tongue: Pale with a sticky-white coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Slow.

ii) Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-3 Taibai, ST-8 Touwei, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, Ren-11 Jianli, ST-22 Guanmen, ST-28 Shuidao.

iii) Prescription

Ping Wei San *Balancing the Stomach Powder*.

iv) Three Treasures

Drain Fields (variation of Huo Po Xia Ling Tang).

9. DAMP-HEAT IN THE SPLEEN

i) Clinical manifestations

A feeling of fullness of the epigastrium and/or lower abdomen, epigastric and/or abdominal pain, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, vomiting, loose stools with offensive odour, burning sensation in the anus, a feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, low-grade fever, dull headache with feeling of heaviness of the head, dull-yellow complexion like tangerine peel, yellow sclera of the eyes, oily sweat, bitter taste, itchy skin or skin eruptions (papules or vesicles), sweating which does not relieve the fever and does not lead to the clearing of Heat.

Tongue: Red with sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Du-9 Zhiyang, L.I.-11 Quchi, BL-20 Pishu, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-11 Jianli, ST-22 Guanmen, ST-28 Shuidao, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Ren-5 Shimen.

iii) Prescription

Lian Po Yin *Coptis-Magnolia Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Ease the Muscles (variation of Lian Po Yin).

10. SPLEEN-HEAT**i) Clinical manifestations**

Burning epigastric and/or abdominal pain, excessive hunger, red tip of the nose, dry lips, mouth ulcers, thirst, dry stools, feeling of heat, scanty-dark urine, yellow complexion.

Tongue: Red with dry-yellow coating.

Pulse: Overflowing-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-2 Dadu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-44 Neiting, Ren-11 Jianli, BL-20 Pishu.

iii) Prescription

Xie Huang San *Draining the Yellow Powder*.

11. SPLEEN-QI DEFICIENCY WITH DAMPNESS**i) Clinical manifestations**

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale or sallow complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, abdominal fullness, a feeling of heaviness, a sticky taste, poor digestion, undigested food in the stools, nausea, dull frontal headache, excessive vaginal discharge.

Tongue: Pale with sticky coating.

Pulse: Soggy.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, SP-9 Yinlingquan, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-28 Shuidao, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen.

iii) Prescription

Si Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction* plus Yi Yi Ren *Semen Coicis lachryma jobi*.

Shi Pi Yin *Bolster the Spleen Decoction*

12. SPLEEN-QI DEFICIENCY WITH PHLEGM**i) Clinical manifestations**

Nausea, vomiting of watery fluids, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, tiredness, poor appetite, a feeling of heaviness, weak limbs, loose stools, dull-pale complexion, cold limbs.

Tongue: Pale, Swollen with sticky coating.

Pulse: Soggy or Weak and slightly Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-9 Yinglingquan, ST-40 Fenglong, BL-20 Pishu, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Ren-5 Shimen.

iii) Prescription

Liu Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction* plus Er Chen Tang *Two Old Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Prosperous Earth or *Central Mansion* plus *Limpid Sea*.

(*Prosperous Earth* = Liu Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction*)

Central Mansion = Shen Ling Bai Zhu San Ginseng-Poria-*Atractylodes Powder*

Limpid Sea = Er Chen Tang *Two Old Decoction*)

13. PHLEGM OBSTRUCTING THE MIDDLE BURNER**i) Clinical manifestations**

A feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, poor appetite, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting,

gnawing hunger, dizziness, feeling of heaviness, loose stools.

Tongue: Swollen with a thick-sticky coating in the centre.

Pulse: Slippery on the right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-10 Xiawan, ST-21 Liangmen, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-22 Guanmen, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-9 Yinglingquan, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

iii) Prescription

Er Chen Tang *Two Old Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Limpid Sea (variation of Er Chen Tang *Two Old Decoction*).

14. YIN FIRE FROM DEFICIENCY OF THE STOMACH AND SPLEEN AND ORIGINAL QI

i) Clinical manifestations

Tiredness, feeling of heat in the face but feeling cold in general, alternating feeling of heat and cold, dry mouth, dry lips, thirst, feeling as if coming down with a cold, mouth ulcers, insomnia, poor appetite, loose stools, weak limbs.

Tongue: Pale

Pulse: Empty or slightly Overflowing but Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan (moxa is applicable), Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, T.B.-5 Waiguan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, P-6 Neiguan.

iii) Prescription

Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang *Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction*

iv) Three Treasures

Tonify Qi and Ease the Muscles (variation of Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang *Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction*).

Breaking Clouds (variation of Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang *Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction*).

15. COMBINED PATTERNS

The Spleen Combined Patterns are:

- Spleen- and Stomach-Qi deficiency
- Spleen- and Heart-Blood deficiency
- Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency
- Spleen- and Liver-Blood deficiency
- Obstruction of the Spleen by Dampness with stagnation of Liver-Qi (Spleen insulting the Liver).

a) Spleen- and Stomach-Qi deficiency

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, lack of taste sensation.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Empty, especially on the Right-middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, Ren-6 Qihai. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Si Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction*.

Shen Ling Bai Zhu San *Ginseng-Poria-Atractylodes Powder*.

iv) Three Treasures

Prosperous Earth (variation of Liu Jun Si Tang *Six Gentlemen Decoction*)

Central Mansion (variation of Shen Ling Bai Zhu San *Ginseng-Poria-Atractylodes Powder*).

b) Spleen- and Heart-Blood deficiency

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, tiredness, weak muscles, loose stools, poor appetite, scanty periods.

Tongue: Pale and Thin.

Pulse: Choppy or Fine.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-14 Juque, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-17 Geshu (with moxa), BL-20 Pishu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli., SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Calm the Shen (variation of Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*).

c) Spleen- and Lung-Qi deficiency

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, slight depression, tendency to obesity, slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike to speak, propensity to catching colds, dislike of cold.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Empty, especially on the right side.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-13 Feishu, Du-12 Shen Zhu, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-3 Taibai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu.

iii) Prescription

Si Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction* plus Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei*.

iv) Three Treasures

Prosperous Earth (variation of Liu Jun Zi Tang *Six Gentlemen Decoction*).

d) Spleen- and Liver-Blood deficiency

i) Clinical manifestations

Poor appetite, slight abdominal distension after eating, tiredness, lassitude, dull-pale complexion, weakness of the limbs, loose stools, thin body, scanty periods or amenorrhoea, insomnia, dizziness, numbness of limbs, blurred vision, 'floaters' in eyes, diminished night vision, pale lips, muscular weakness, cramps, withered and

brittle nails, dry hair and skin, slight depression, a feeling of aimlessness.

Tongue: Pale body, especially on the sides, which in extreme cases can assume an orange colour, and dry.

Pulse: Choppy or Fine.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-18 Ganshu, BL-23 Shenshu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, BL-17 Geshu (with direct moxa).

iii) Prescription

Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Calm the Shen (variation of Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*).

e) Obstruction of Spleen by Dampness with stagnation of Liver-Qi

i) Clinical manifestations

A feeling of oppression and fullness of the epigastrium, nausea, no appetite, loose stools, a feeling of heaviness, dry mouth without desire to drink, sallow complexion, hypochondrial pain, bitter taste, a sticky taste, epigastric and hypochondrial distension, irritability.

Tongue: Thick-sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Wiry.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, LIV-13 Zhangmen, LIV-14 Qimen, G.B.-24 Riyue, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, ST-19 Burong, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

iii) Prescription

Ping Wei San *Balancing the Stomach Powder* plus Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* and Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi*.

Huo Xiang Zheng Qi San *Agastache Upright Qi Powder* plus Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* and Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi*.

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 - a) Rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Spleen
 - b) Rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach
 - c) Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs
 - d) Liver- and Heart-Blood deficiency

1. STAGNATION OF LIVER-QI

i) Clinical manifestations

Hypochondrial or epigastric distension, a slight feeling of oppression of the chest, irritability, melancholy, depression, moodiness, premenstrual tension, irregular periods, premenstrual breast distension, a feeling of a lump in the throat.

Tongue: in light cases the tongue-body colour may not change; in severe cases the sides will be red.

Pulse: Wiry, especially on the left side.

The Liver patterns are:

1. Stagnation of Liver-Qi
2. Stagnant Liver-Qi turning into Heat
3. Rebellious Liver-Qi
4. Liver-Yang rising
5. Liver-Blood stasis
6. Liver-Fire blazing upwards

ii) Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-13 Zhangmen, LIV-14 Qimen, LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou.

iii) Prescription

Yue Ju Wan *Gardenia-Ligusticum Pill*.

Xiao Yao San *Free and Easy Wanderer Powder*.

iv) Three Treasures and Women's Treasure

Release Constraint (variation of Yue Ju Wan).

Freeing the Moon (variation of Xiao Yao San).

2. STAGNANT LIVER-QI TURNING INTO HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Hypochondrial or epigastric distension, a slight feeling of oppression of the chest, irritability, melancholy, depression, moodiness, premenstrual tension, irregular periods, premenstrual breast distension, a feeling of a lump in the throat, a feeling of heat, red face, thirst, propensity to outbursts of anger, heavy periods.

Tongue: Red on the sides.

Pulse: Wiry, especially on the left side and slightly Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

P-6 Neiguan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-13 Zhangmen, LIV-14 Qimen, LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou, LIV-2 Xingjian.

iii) Prescription

Dan Zhi Xiao Yao San *Moutan-Gardenia Free and Easy Wanderer Powder*.

iv) Three Treasures

Freeing the Sun (variation of Dan Zhi Xiao Yao San).

3. REBELLIOUS LIVER-QI

i) Clinical manifestations

Hypochondrial or epigastric distension, hiccup, sighing, nausea, vomiting, belching, 'churning feeling in the stomach', irritability, in women breast distension.

Tongue: In light cases the tongue-body colour may not change; in severe cases the sides will be red.

Pulse: Wiry. It may be particularly Wiry on the Liver and Stomach positions.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-14 Qimen, P-6 Neiguan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-6 Zhigou, L.I.-4 Hegu, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-19 Burong.

iii) Prescription

Chai Hu Shu Gan Tang *Bupleurum Soothing the Liver Decoction*.

Yi Gan San *Restrain the Liver Powder*.

Si Ni San *Four Rebellious Powder*.

4. LIVER-YANG RISING

i) Clinical manifestations

Headache which may be on the temples, eyes or lateral side of the head; dizziness; tinnitus; deafness; blurred vision; dry mouth and throat; insomnia; irritability; feeling worked-up; propensity to outbursts of anger; stiff neck.

Tongue: The tongue presentation may vary widely depending on the underlying condition causing Liver-Yang rising. If this derives from Liver-Blood deficiency, the tongue-body colour will be Pale; if it derives from Liver-Yin deficiency, the tongue-body colour will be slightly red on the sides and without coating. In some cases, Liver-Yang rising may develop from Rebellious Liver-Qi – in this case the tongue-body colour may be normal or slightly Red on the sides.

Pulse: Wiry. However, if there is a background of Liver-Blood or Liver-Yin deficiency, the pulse may be Wiry only on one side or it may also be Wiry but Fine.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, T.B.-5 Waiguan, P-6 Neiguan, L.I.-4 Hegu, G.B.-43 Xiashi, G.B.-38 Yangfu, BL-2 Zanzhu, Taiyang extra point, G.B.-20 Fengchi, G.B.-9 Tianchong, G.B.-8 Shuaigu, G.B.-6 Xuanli. In case of Liver-Blood

or Liver-Yin deficiency: SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-3 Taixi, LIV-8 Ququan, ST-36 Zusanli.

iii) Prescription

Tian Ma Gou Teng Yin *Gastrodia-Uncaria Decoction*.

Ling Jiao Gou Teng Tang *Cornu Antelopis-Uncaria Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Bend Bamboo (no classical antecedent).

5. LIVER-BLOOD STASIS

i) Clinical manifestations

Hypochondrial pain, abdominal pain, vomiting of blood, epistaxis, painful periods, irregular periods, menstrual blood dark and clotted, infertility, masses in abdomen, purple nails, purple lips, purple or dark complexion, dry skin (in severe cases), purple petechiae.

Tongue: Purple, especially, or only, on the sides. In severe cases, there will be purple spots on the sides.

Pulse: Wiry, Firm or Choppy.

ii) Acupuncture

G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-3 Taichong, BL-18 Ganshu, BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai, Ren-6 Qihai, SP-4 Gongsun and P-6 Neiguan (opening points of the Penetrating Vessel), ST-29 Guilai, KI-14 Siman, LIV-5 Ligou, LIV-6 Zhongdu.

iii) Prescription

Ge Xia Zhu Yu Tang *Eliminating Stasis below the Diaphragm Decoction*.

Shi Xiao San *Breaking into a Smile Powder*.

Yan Hu Suo Tang *Corydalis Decoction*.

iv) Women's Treasure

Stir Field of Elixir (variation of Ge Xia Zhu Yu Tang).

6. LIVER-FIRE BLAZING UPWARDS

i) Clinical manifestations

Irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, tinnitus and/or deafness (with sudden onset), temporal

headache, dizziness, red face and eyes, thirst, bitter taste, dream-disturbed sleep, constipation with dry stools, dark-yellow urine, epistaxis, haematemesis, haemoptysis.

Tongue: Red with redder sides and dry-yellow coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Taiyang extra point, Du-24 Shenting, G.B.-13 Benshen, L.I.-11 Quchi, G.B.-1 Tongziliaoh, G.B.-9 Tianchong, G.B.-8 Shuaigu, G.B.-6 Xuanli, LIV-1 Dadun.

iii) Prescription

Long Dan Xie Gan Tang *Gentiana Draining the Liver Decoction*.

Dang Gui Long Hui Tang *Angelica-Gentiana-Aloe Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Drain Fire (variation of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang).

7. DAMP-HEAT IN THE LIVER

i) Clinical manifestations

Fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium; bitter taste; sticky mouth sensation; poor appetite; nausea; feeling of heaviness of the body; yellow vaginal discharge; vaginal itching; vulvar eczema or sores; midcycle bleeding and/or pain; pain, redness and swelling of the scrotum; genital, papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching; urinary difficulty; burning on urination; dark urine.

Tongue: Red body with redder sides, sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Wiry-Rapid.

ii) Prescription

Long Dan Xie Gan Tang *Gentiana Draining the Liver Decoction*.

iii) Three Treasures

Drain Fire (variation of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang).

8. DAMP-HEAT IN THE LIVER AND GALL-BLADDER

i) Clinical manifestations

Fullness of the hypochondrium, abdomen or hypogastrium; bitter taste; poor appetite; nausea; feeling of heaviness of the body; yellow vaginal discharge; vaginal itching; vulvar eczema or sores; midcycle bleeding and/or pain; pain, redness and swelling of the scrotum; genital, papular or vesicular skin rashes and itching; urinary difficulty; burning on urination; dark urine; hypochondrial pain; fever; yellow complexion and eyes; vomiting.

Tongue: Red body with redder sides, unilateral or bilateral sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Wiry-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-14 Qimen, G.B.-24 Riyue, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, BL-18 Ganshu, BL-19 Danshu, Du-9 Zhiyang, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-3 Taibai, L.I.-11 Quchi, LIV-2 Xingjian, LIV-3 Taichong.

iii) Prescription

Long Dan Xie Gan Tang *Gentiana Draining the Liver Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Drain Fire (variation of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang).

9. LIVER-WIND

a) Extreme Heat generating Wind

i) Clinical manifestations

High temperature, convulsions, rigidity of the neck, tremor of limbs, opisthotonos, in severe cases coma.

Tongue: Deep-Red, Stiff, dry-yellow coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, LIV-2 Xingjian, Shixuan extra points, S.I.-3 Houxi, Du-20 Baihui, Du-16 Fengfu, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Du-8 Jinsuo, Du-14 Dazhui.

iii) Prescription

Ling Jiao Gou Teng Tang *Cornu Antelopis-Uncaria Decoction*.

b) Liver-Yang rising generating Wind

i) Liver-Yang rising deriving from Liver-Yin deficiency

Clinical manifestations

Tremor, facial tic, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, hypertension, dry throat, dry eyes, blurred vision, numbness or tingling of limbs, poor memory.

Tongue: normal-coloured without coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Fine.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Du-19 Houding, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-8 Ququan, KI-3 Taixi.

Prescription

Da Ding Feng Zhu *Big Stopping Wind Pearl* (for febrile-disease Heat injuring Yin).

San Jia Fu Mai Tang *Three Carapaces Restoring the Pulse Decoction*.

Three Treasures

Bend Bamboo (no classical antecedent).

ii) Liver-Yang rising deriving from Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency

Clinical manifestations

Tremor, facial tic, severe dizziness, tinnitus, headache, hypertension, dry throat, dry eyes, blurred vision, numbness or tingling of limbs, poor memory, backache, scanty urination, night-sweating.

Tongue: normal-coloured without coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Fine.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Du-19 Houding, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-8 Ququan, KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Prescription

Zhen Gan Xi Feng Tang *Pacifying the Liver and Subduing Wind Decoction*.

Jian Ling Tang *Constructing Roof Tiles Decoction*.

Three Treasures

Bend Bamboo (no classical antecedent).

iii) Liver-Yang rising deriving from Liver-Blood deficiency

Clinical manifestations

Tremor, dizziness, tinnitus, headache, hypertension, dry throat, blurred vision, numbness or tingling of limbs, poor memory, insomnia.

Tongue: Pale and Thin.

Pulse: Wiry-Fine.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Du-19 Houding, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-8 Ququan, KI-3 Taixi, BL-17 Geshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Prescription

E Jiao Ji Zi Huang Tang *Gelatinum Corii Asini-Egg Yolk Decoction*.

Three Treasures

Bend Bamboo (no classical antecedent).

c) Liver-Fire generating Wind

Clinical manifestations

Tremor, irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, tinnitus and/or deafness (with sudden onset), temporal headache, dizziness, red face and eyes, thirst, bitter taste, dream-disturbed sleep, constipation with dry stools, dark-yellow urine, epistaxis, haematemesis, haemoptysis.

Tongue: Red with redder sides and dry-yellow coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Rapid.

Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Taiyang extra point, G.B.-13 Benshen, L.I.-11 Quchi, G.B.-1 Tongziliaoh, G.B.-9 Tianchong, G.B.-8 Shuaigu, G.B.-6 Xuanli, Du-24 Shenting, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-1 Dadun, Du-8 Jinsuo.

Prescription

Ling Jiao Gou Teng Tang *Cornu Antelopis-Uncaria Decoction* plus Long Dan Cao *Radix Gentianae scabrae*.

Three Treasures

Drain Fire (variation of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang)

d) Liver-Blood deficiency giving rise to Wind

Clinical manifestations

Fine tremor, facial tic, dizziness, blurred vision, numbness or tingling of limbs, poor memory, insomnia, scanty periods.

Tongue: Pale and Thin.

Pulse: Wiry-Fine.

Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Du-19 Houding, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-8 Ququan, KI-3 Taixi, BL-17 Geshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan.

Prescription

E Jiao Ji Zi Huang Tang *Gelatinum Corii Asini-Egg Yolk Decoction*.

Three Treasures

Bend Bamboo (no classical antecedent).

10. LIVER-WIND HARBOURING PHLEGM

i) Clinical manifestations

Headache, dizziness, blurred vision, a feeling of heaviness and muzziness (fuzziness) of the head, occipital stiffness, tinnitus, nausea, cough with profuse sputum, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep.

Tongue: Stiff, Swollen with sticky coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Slippy.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, ST-40 Fenglong, L.I.-4 Hegu, G.B.-20 Fengchi, ST-8 Touwei, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Ban Xia Bai Zhu Tian Ma Tang *Pinellia-Atractylodes-Gastrodia Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Clear Yang (variation of Tian Ma Ban Xia Bai Zhu Tang).

11. LIVER-QI STAGNATION WITH PHLEGM

i) Clinical manifestations

Mental depression; irritability; moodiness; a feeling of oppression of the chest; a feeling of a lump in the throat; difficulty in swallowing; sighing; cough with expectoration of phlegm; hypochondrial distension; premenstrual breast distension, swelling and pain.

Tongue: Swollen with a sticky coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Slippy.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-3 Taichong, ST-40 Fenglong, L.I.-4 Hegu, Du-24 Shenting, G.B.-13 Benshen, P-7 Daling, P-6 Neiguan.

iii) Prescription

Yue Ju Wan *Gardenia-Ligusticum Pill*.

Ban Xia Hou Po Tang *Pinellia-Magnolia Decoction*.

Ju He Wan *Citrus Seed Pill*.

Si Hai Shu Yu Wan *Four Seas Soothe Stagnation Pill* (specific for goitre from Qi stagnation and Phlegm).

iv) Three Treasures

Release Constraint (variation of Yue Ju Wan).

Open the Heart (variation of Ban Xia Hou Po Tang).

Bright Spirit (variation of Wen Dan Tang).

12. LIVER-BLOOD DEFICIENCY WITH PHLEGM

i) Clinical manifestations

Mental depression, dizziness, blurred vision, tingling of limbs, brittle nails, sputum in the throat, a feeling of

oppression of the chest, a feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head, irregular periods, late periods.

Tongue: Pale with a sticky coating.

Pulse: Choppy on the left, Slippery on the right.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-4 Guanyuan, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

iii) Prescription

Ba Zhen Tang *Eight Precious Decoction* plus Er Chen Tang *Two Old Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Precious Sea (variation of Ba Zhen Tang) plus *Limpid Sea* (variation of Er Chen Tang).

13. STAGNATION OF COLD IN THE LIVER CHANNEL

i) Clinical manifestations

Fullness and distension of the hypogastrium with pain which refers downwards to the scrotum and testis and upwards to the hypochondrium; the pain is alleviated by warmth, straining of the testis or contraction of the scrotum; vertical headache; feeling of cold; cold hands and feet; vomiting of clear-watery fluid or dry vomiting. In women there can be shrinking of the vagina.

Tongue: Pale and wet with a white coating.

Pulse: Deep-Wiry-Slow.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-3 Zhongji, LIV-5 Ligou, LIV-1 Dadun, LIV-3 Taichong. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Nuan Gan Jian *Warming the Liver Decoction*.

14. LIVER-BLOOD DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs; insomnia; blurred vision; 'floaters' in eyes; diminished night vision; scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea; dull-pale

complexion without lustre; pale lips; muscular weakness; cramps; withered and brittle nails; dry hair and skin; depression; a feeling of aimlessness.

Tongue: Pale body especially on the sides which, in extreme cases, can assume an orange colour, and Dry.

Pulse: Choppy or Fine.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-18 Ganshu, BL-20 Pishu, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-17 Geshu, Yuyao extra point.

iii) Prescription

Bu Gan Tang *Tonifying the Liver Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Precious Sea (variation of Ba Zhen Tang).

Calm the Shen (variation of Gui Pi Tang).

15. LIVER-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs; insomnia; blurred vision; 'floaters' in eyes; dry eyes; diminished night vision; scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea; dull-pale complexion without lustre but with red cheek-bones; muscular weakness; cramps; withered and brittle nails; very dry hair and skin; depression; a feeling of aimlessness.

Tongue: Normal-coloured without coating or with rootless coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, Yuyao extra point.

iii) Prescription

Yi Guan Jian *One Linking Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Root the Spirit (variation of Yin Mei Tang).

Nourish the Soul (variation of Suan Zao Ren Tang).

16. LIVER-QI DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, nervousness, timidity, propensity to being easily startled, lack of courage and initiative, indecision, sighing, restless dreams, depression, irritability, hypochondrial distension, irregular periods.

Tongue: Pale or normal.

Pulse: Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, G.B.-40 Qiuxu, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-18 Ganshu.

iii) Prescription

Empirical prescription by Dr. Chen Jia Xu.¹

17. LIVER-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH EMPTY-HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, numbness or tingling of limbs; insomnia; blurred vision; 'floaters' in eyes; dry eyes; diminished night vision; scanty menstruation or heavy menstrual bleeding (if Empty Heat is severe); red cheek-bones; muscular weakness; cramps; withered and brittle nails; very dry hair and skin; depression; a feeling of aimlessness; anxiety; a feeling of heat in the evening; night-sweating, five-palm heat; thirst with desire to drink in small sips.

Tongue: Red without coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and slightly Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, Yuyao extra point, LIV-2 Xingjian, L.I.-11 Quchi.

iii) Prescription

Yi Guan Jian *One Linking Decoction* plus Zhi Mu Radix *Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis* and Mu Dan Pi Cortex *Moutan radialis*.

Qing Hao Bie Jia Tang *Artemisia Annua-Carapax Amydae Decoction*.

Qing Gu San *Clearing the Bones Powder*.

18. LIVER PHLEGM-FIRE

i) Clinical manifestations

Irritability, propensity to outbursts of anger, tinnitus and/or deafness (with sudden onset), temporal headache, dizziness, red face and eyes, thirst, bitter taste, dream-disturbed sleep, constipation with dry stools, dark-yellow urine, epistaxis, haematemesis, haemoptysis, a feeling of oppression of the chest, rattling sound in the throat, a feeling of muzziness (fuzziness) of the head, expectoration of sputum, hypertension.

Tongue: Red with redder sides, Swollen and with sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Slippery-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-20 Fengchi, Taiyang extra point, G.B.-13 Benshen, L.I.-11 Quchi, G.B.-1 Tongziliau, G.B.-9 Tianchong, G.B.-8 Shuaigu, G.B.-6 Xuanli, Du-24 Shenting, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-1 Dadun, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-9 Yinlingquan, L.I.-4 Hegu.

iii) Prescription

Wen Dan Tang *Warming the Gall-Bladder Decoction*.

Ling Jiao Gou Teng Tang *Cornu Antelopsis-Uncaria Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Clear the Soul (variation of Wen Dan Tang).
Settling the Soul (no classical antecedent).

19. LIVER-YANG DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Tendency to worry, fearfulness, morose, depression, floaters, blurred vision, feeling cold, hypochondrial pain and distension, cold legs, numbness of head and body, tingling of the limbs, greenish complexion, pale and withered nails, contraction of the tendons, inability to grasp, lack of libido, impotence, cold penis, damp scrotum, nocturnal emissions without dreams, contraction of the vagina, feeling of cold and pain in the abdomen in women, late periods, trickling of periods, feeling of cold in the waist, infertility.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Deep-Fine or Wiry-Slow but Weak on the left-Middle position.

iii) Acupuncture

G.B.-40 Qiuxu, LIV-8 Ququan, LIV-3 Taichong, BL-18 Ganshu, HE-7 Shenmen, T.B.-3 Zhongzhu, Du-20 Baihui. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Long Chi Qing Hun Tang Dens Draconis *Clearing the Ethereal Soul Decoction*.

Wen Yang Bu Gan Jian *Warming Yang and Tonifying the Liver Decoction* plus Ren Shen Radix Ginseng, Huang Qi Radix Astragali membranacei, Chai Hu Radix Bupleuri, Sheng Ma Rhizoma Cimicifugae.

20. COMBINED PATTERNS

The Liver combined patterns are:

- Rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Spleen
- Rebellious Liver-Qi invading the Stomach
- Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency (see under Kidney Combined Patterns)
- Liver- and Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat (see under Kidney Combined Patterns)
- Liver- and Heart-Blood deficiency

a) Rebellious Liver-Qi invading the spleen

i) Clinical manifestations

Irritability, abdominal distension and pain, alternation of constipation and diarrhoea, stools sometimes dry and bitty (small pieces) and sometimes loose, flatulence, tiredness.

Tongue: Normal-coloured or slightly Red on the sides.

Pulse: Wiry on the left and Weak on the right.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-13 Zhangmen, LIV-14 Qimen, LIV-3 Taichong, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-25 Tianshu, SP-15 Daheng, Ren-12 Zhongwan, T.B.-6 Zhigou, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, P-6 Neiguan.

iii) Prescription

Xiao Yao San *Free and Easy Wanderer Powder*.

iv) Three Treasures

Freeing the Moon (variation of Xiao Yao San).

b) Rebellious Liver-Qi invading the stomach

i) Clinical manifestations

Irritability, epigastric and hypochondrial distension and pain, a feeling of oppression in the epigastrium, sour regurgitation, hiccup, belching, nausea, vomiting, sighing, weak limbs.

Tongue: normal-coloured or slightly Red on the sides.

Pulse: Wiry on the left and Weak on the right or Wiry on both Middle positions.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-14 Qimen, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, Ren-13 Shangwan, Ren-10 Xiawan, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-19 Burong, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-34 Liangqiu, BL-21 Weishu.

iii) Prescription

Si Mo Tang *Four Milled-Herb Decoction*.

Xuan Fu Dai Zhe Tang *Inula-Haematite Decoction*.

Ju Pi Zhu Ru Tang *Citrus-Bambusa Decoction*.

Ding Xiang Shi Di Tang *Caryophyllum-Diospyros Decoction*.

Ban Xia Hou Po Tang *Pinellia-Magnolia Decoction* plus Zuo Jin Wan *Left Metal Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Open the Heart (variation of Ban Xia Hou Po Tang).

c) Liver-Fire insulting the lungs

i) Clinical manifestations

Breathlessness, asthma, a feeling of fullness and distension of the chest and hypochondrium, cough with a yellow or blood-tinged sputum, headache, dizziness, red face, thirst, bitter taste, bloodshot eyes, scanty-dark urine, constipation.

Tongue: Red with redder sides and dry-yellow coating.

Pulse: Wiry.

ii) Acupuncture

LIV-2 Xingjian, LIV-3 Taichong, LIV-14 Qimen, Ren-17 Shanzhong, Ren-22 Tiantu, P-6 Neiguan, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi.

iii) Prescription

Long Dan Xie Gan Tang *Gentiana Draining the Liver Decoction* plus Su Zi *Fructus Perillae frutescentis*, Sang Bai Pi *Cortex Mori albae radices* and Zhu Ru *Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis*.

d) Liver- and Heart-Blood deficiency

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, dizziness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, poor memory, anxiety, propensity to be startled, dull-pale complexion, pale lips, blurred vision, floaters in eyes, diminished night vision, tingling or numbness of limbs, scanty periods or amenorrhoea, cramps, muscular weakness, dry hair and skin, depression, a feeling of aimlessness, withered and brittle nails.

Tongue: Pale and Thin.

Pulse: Choppy or Fine, especially on the left.

ii) Acupuncture

He-7 Shenmen, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-14 Jique, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-15 Jiuwei, BL-17 Geshu, BL-18 Ganshu, BL-20 Pishu, LIV-8 Ququan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-36 Zusanli.

iii) Prescription

Gui Pi Tang *Tonifying the Spleen Decoction*.

Sheng Yu Tang *Sage Healing Decoction*.

Bu Gan Tang *Tonifying the Liver Decoction*.

Dang Gui Ji Xue Teng Tang *Angelica-Ji Xue Teng Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Calm the Shen (variation of Gui Pi Tang).

END NOTES

1. Chen Jia Xu, Discussion on the Syndrome of Liver-Qi Deficiency in Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), Beijing, 5, 1994, pp. 264-7.

94 Lung Patterns

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The Lung Patterns are:

1. Lung-Qi deficiency
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13. Cold-Phlegm in the Lungs
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21. Combined Patterns
 - Lung-Qi and Kidney-Yang deficiency (see 'Kidney deficiency, Water overflowing to the Lungs' or 'Kidney failing to receive Qi' patterns under the Kidney Patterns)
 - Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency (see under Kidney Combined Patterns)
 - Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs (see under Liver Combined Patterns)
 - Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency (see under Spleen Combined Patterns)
 - Lung- and Heart-Qi deficiency

1. LUNG-QI DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Slight shortness of breath, slight cough, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Empty, especially on the right-Front position.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-13 Feishu, Du-12 Shen-zhu, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan.

iii) Prescription

Ren Shen Bu Fei Tang *Ginseng Tonifying the Lungs Decoction.*

2. LUNG-YANG DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Slight shortness of breath, slight cough with profuse watery sputum, weak voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, feeling cold, cold hands, a feeling of cold of the upper back, absence of thirst.

Tongue: Pale and slightly wet.

Pulse: Weak, especially on the right-Front position.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-13 Feishu, Du-12 Shenzhu, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan. Moxa must be used.

iii) Prescription

Sheng Mai San *Generating the Pulse Powder* combined with Gan Cao Gan Jiang Tang *Glycyrrhiza-Zingiber Decoction* plus Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei*.

3. LUNG-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Cough which is dry or with scanty-sticky sputum, weak and/hoarse voice, dry mouth and throat, tickly throat, tiredness, dislike of speaking, thin body or thin chest, night-sweating.

Tongue: normal-coloured, dry without coating (or with rootless coating) in the front part.

Pulse: Floating-Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-17 Shanzhong, BL-43 Gaohuangshu, BL-13 Feishu, Du-12 Shenzhu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Bai He Gu Jin Tang *Lilium Consolidating Metal Decoction*.

iv) Three treasures

Jade Spring (variation of Sha Shen Mai Dong Tang).

4. LUNG-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH EMPTY HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Dry cough or with scanty sticky sputum which could be blood-tinged, dry mouth and throat at night, weak and/or hoarse voice, tickly throat, night-sweating, tiredness, malar flush, dislike of speaking, a feeling of heat or a low-grade fever in the evening, 5-palm heat, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, insomnia, anxiety, thin body, thin chest.

Tongue: Red without coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-17 Shanzhong, BL-43 Gaohuangshu, BL-13 Feishu, Du-12 Shenzhu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LU-10 Yuji, L.I.-11 Quchi.

iii) Prescription

Yang Yin Qing Fei Tang *Nourishing Yin and Clearing the Lungs Decoction*.

5. LUNG-QI AND LUNG-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Slight cough, shortness of breath, weak and/or hoarse voice, spontaneous daytime sweating, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, tiredness, pale complexion, propensity to catching colds.

Tongue: Pale if Qi deficiency predominates, normal-coloured and without coating if Yin deficiency predominates. The tongue could also be Pale in general but without coating in the front.

Pulse: Empty if Qi deficiency predominates, Floating-Empty on the right-Front position if Yin deficiency predominates.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-13 Feishu, BL-43 Gaohuangshu, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Sheng Mai San *Generating the Pulse Powder*.

Mai Men Dong Tang *Ophiopogon Decoction*.

Zhu Ye Shi Gao Tang *Lophatherus-Gypsum Decoction* if there is injury of Lung-Yin following a febrile disease and with a preexisting Lung-Qi deficiency.

iv) Three Treasures

Jade Spring (variation of Sha Shen Mai Dong Tang).

6. LUNG-DRYNESS**i) Clinical manifestations**

Dry cough, dry skin, dry throat, dry mouth, thirst, hoarse voice.

Tongue: dry.

Pulse: Empty especially on the right-Front position.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-6 Zhaohai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli.

iii) Prescription

Bai He Gu Jin Tang *1 Consolidating Metal Decoction*.

Mai Men Dong Tang *Ophiopogon Decoction*.

Zeng Ye Tang *Increasing Fluids Decoction*.

7. INVASION OF LUNGS BY WIND-COLD**i) Clinical manifestations**

Aversion to cold, fever, cough, itchy throat, slight breathlessness, stuffed or runny nose with clear watery discharge, sneezing, occipital headache, body aches.

Tongue: Thin-white coating.

Pulse: Floating-Tight.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, BL-12 Fengmen (with cupping), Du-16 Fengfu.

iii) Prescription

Ma Huang Tang *Ephedra Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Expel Wind-Cold (variation of Jing Fang Jie Biao Tang).

8. INVASION OF LUNGS BY WIND-HEAT**i) Clinical manifestations**

Aversion to cold, fever, cough, sore throat, stuffed or runny nose with yellow discharge, headache, body aches, slight sweating, slight thirst, swollen tonsils.

Tongue: Slightly Red on the sides in the chest area or on the front part.

Pulse: Floating-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

L.I.-4 Hegu, L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-11 Shaoshang, Du-14 Dazhui, BL-12 Fengmen (with cupping), Du-16 Fengfu, G.B.-20 Fengchi, T.B.-5 Waiguan.

iii) Prescription

Sang Ju Yin *Morus-Chrysanthemum Decoction*.

Yin Qiao San *Lonicera-Forsythia Powder*.

iv) Three Treasures

Expel Wind-Heat (variation of Yin Qiao San)

9. INVASION OF LUNGS BY WIND-DRYNESS**i) Clinical manifestations**

Dry cough, aversion to cold, fever, dry throat, tickly throat, dry nose, discomfort of the chest.

Tongue: Thin-dry-white coating.

Pulse: Floating.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-4 Hegu, T.B.-5 Waiguan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-12 Fengmen (with cupping), BL-13 Feishu.

iii) Prescription

Sang Xing Tang *Morus-Prunus Decoction*.

Qing Zao Jiu Fei Tang *Clearing Dryness and Rescuing the Lungs Decoction*.

10. INVASION OF LUNGS BY WIND-WATER

i) Clinical manifestations

Sudden swelling of eyes and face gradually spreading to the whole body, bright-shiny complexion, scanty and pale urination, aversion to wind, fever, cough, slight breathlessness.

Tongue: Sticky-white coating.

Pulse: Floating-Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-6 Pianli, L.I.-7 Wenli, L.I.-4 Hegu, BL-12 Fengmen, Ren-9 Shuifen, BL-13 Feishu., Du-26 Renzhong.

iii) Prescription

Xiao Qing Long Tang *Small Green Dragon Decoction*.

11. LUNG-HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Cough, slight breathlessness, feeling of heat, chest ache, flaring of nostrils, thirst, red face.

Tongue: Red with yellow coating.

Pulse: Overflowing-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-10 Yuji, LU-7 Lieque, L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-1 Zhongfu, BL-13 Feshu.

iii) Prescription

Qing Bai San *Clearing White Powder*.

12. DAMP-PHLEGM IN THE LUNGS

i) Clinical manifestations

Chronic cough coming in bouts with profuse white-sticky sputum which is easy to expectorate, white-pasty

complexion, a feeling of oppression in the chest, shortness of breath, dislike of lying down, wheezing, nausea, a feeling of heaviness, a feeling of muzziness (fuzziness), dizziness.

Tongue: Swollen with a sticky-white coating.

Pulse: Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, Ren-17 Shanzhong, ST-40 Fenglong, P-6 Neiguan, Ren-22 Tiantu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, BL-20 Pishu, BL-13 Feishu, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

iii) Prescription

Er Chen Tang *Two Old Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Limpid Sea (variation of Er Chen Tang).

13. COLD-PHLEGM IN THE LUNGS

i) Clinical manifestations

Cough with expectoration of white-watery sputum, aggravated by exposure to cold, feeling cold, cold hands, phlegm in the throat, dizziness, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of cold of the chest, a feeling of heaviness, a feeling of muzziness (fuzziness), dizziness.

Tongue: Swollen and wet tongue with a sticky-white coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Slow.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-1 Zhongfu, Ren-17 Shanzhong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-13 Feishu, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-22 Tiantu, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu. Moxa must be used.

iii) Prescription

She Gan Ma Huang Tang *Belamcanda-Ephedra Decoction*.
Ling Gui Zhu Gan Tang *Poria-Ramulus Cinnamonmi-Atractylodis-Glycyrrhiza Decoction*.

Ling Gan Wu Wei Jiang Xin Tang *Poria-Glycyrrhiza-Schisandra-Zingiberis-Asarum Decoction*.

San Zi Yang Qin Tang *Three-Seed Nourishing the Ancestors Decoction*.

14. PHLEGM-HEAT IN THE LUNGS

i) Clinical manifestations

Barking cough with profuse sticky-yellow or green sputum, shortness of breath, wheezing, a feeling of oppression of the chest, a feeling of heat, thirst, insomnia, agitation.

Tongue: Red, Swollen with a sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-7 Lieque, LU-10 Yuji, L.I.-11 Quchi, LU-1 Zhongfu, BL-13 Feishu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong.

iii) Prescription

Wen Dan Tang *Warming the Gall-Bladder Decoction*.

Qing Qi Hua Tan Tang *Clearing Qi and Resolving Phlegm Decoction*.

15. PHLEGM-DRYNESS IN THE LUNGS

i) Clinical manifestations

Dry cough but with occasional difficult expectoration of scanty sputum, shortness of breath, a feeling of oppression of the chest, dry throat, wheezing, pasty-dry complexion.

Tongue: Swollen with a dry-sticky coating.

Pulse: Fine-Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque and KI-6 Zhaohai in combination, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, ST-40 Fenglong, BL-13 Feishu, Ren-17 Shanzhong.

iii) Prescription

Bei Mu Gua Lou San *Fritillaria-Trichosanthes Powder*.

16. PHLEGM-FLUIDS IN THE LUNGS

i) Clinical manifestations

Cough with expectoration of white-watery mucus, breathlessness, splashing sound in the chest, vomiting

of white-watery-frothy sputum, feeling cold, cough which may be elicited by a scare.

Tongue: Pale with thick-sticky-white coating.

Pulse: Fine-Slippery or Weak-Floating.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-5 Chize, LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-17 Shanzhong, BL-13 Feishu, ST-40 Fenglong, BL-43 Gaohuangshu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-9 Yinlingquan.

iii) Prescription

Ling Gan Wu Wei Jiang Xin Tang *Poria-Glycyrrhiza-Schisandra-Zingiberis-Asarum Decoction*.

San Zi Yang Qin Tang *Three-Seed Nourishing the Ancestors Decoction*.

17. LUNG-QI DEFICIENCY WITH PHLEGM

i) Clinical manifestations

Chronic cough which is worse on exertion, scanty phlegm that is difficult to expectorate or dilute watery phlegm, spontaneous sweating, feeling cold, shortness of breath, a feeling of oppression of the chest, weak voice.

Tongue: Pale and slightly Swollen in the front.

Pulse: Empty on the right-Front position and slightly Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-17 Shanzhong, BL-13 Feishu.

iii) Prescription

Bu Fei Tang *Tonifying the Lungs Decoction* plus Er Chen Tang *Two Old Decoction*.

18. LUNG-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH PHLEGM

i) Clinical manifestations

Bouts of dry cough followed by expectoration of scanty sputum, a feeling of oppression of the chest, night-sweating, feeling of heat in the afternoon, dry throat.

Tongue: Peeled in the front, Swollen, sticky coating in the centre.

Pulse: Weak on the right-Front position and slightly Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

Lu-9 Taiyuan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong, BL-43 Gaohuangshu.

iii) Prescription

Bai He Gu Jin Tang *Lilium Consolidating Metal Decoction* plus Er Chen Tang *Two Old Decoction*.

19. LUNG-QI STAGNATION

i) Clinical manifestations

A feeling of a lump in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, a feeling of oppression or distension of the chest, slight breathlessness, sighing, sadness, slight anxiety, depression.

Tongue: Slightly Red on the sides in the chest area.

Pulse: Very slightly Tight on the right-Front position.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-7 Lieque, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-15 Jiuwei, P-6 Neiguan.

iii) Prescription

Ban Xia Hou Po Tang *Pinella-Magnolia Decoction*.

20. LUNG-QI COLLAPSE

i) Clinical manifestations

Weak and interrupted breathing, profuse sweating, sweat drops like pearls, extreme cold feeling, very cold hands, bright-pale complexion.

Tongue: Pale or Bluish-Purple.

Pulse: Floating-Scattered or Weak-Minute.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, LU-9 Taiyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-13 Feishu. Moxa must be used; in direct

moxibustion with moxa cones on slices of aconite on Ren-6 is particularly applicable.

iii) Prescription

Sheng Mai San *Generating the Pulse Powder* in higher doses than normal.

21. COMBINED PATTERNS

The Combined Patterns of the Lungs are:

- Lung-Qi and Kidney-Yang deficiency (see 'Kidney deficiency, Water overflowing to the Lungs' or 'Kidney failing to receive Qi' patterns under the Kidney Patterns)
- Lung- and Kidney-Yin deficiency (see under Kidney Combined Patterns)
- Liver-Fire insulting the Lungs (see under Liver Combined Patterns)
- Lung- and Spleen-Qi deficiency (see under Spleen Combined Patterns)
- Lung- and Heart-Qi deficiency

a) Lung- and Heart-Qi deficiency

i) Clinical manifestations

Slight breathlessness, slight cough, weak voice, dislike of speaking, bright-white complexion, propensity to catching colds, tiredness, dislike of cold, palpitations, shortness of breath on exertion, listlessness, depression, spontaneous sweating, sighing.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Empty, especially on both Front positions.

ii) Acupuncture

LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-7 Lieque, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-13 Feishu, Du-12 Shen-zhu, ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, HE-5 Tongli, P-6 Neiguan, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-17 Shanzhong.

ii) Prescription

Si Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction* plus Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei*.

Bao Yuan Tang *Preserving the Source Decoction*.

Bu Fei Tang *Tonifying the Lungs Decoction*.

Sheng Mai San *Generating the Pulse Powder*.

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Kidney Patterns

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Kidney-Qi deficiency
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The Kidney patterns are:

1. Kidney-Qi deficiency
2. Kidney-Yang deficiency
3. Kidney-Yin deficiency
4. Kidney-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
5. Kidney-Yang and Kidney-Yin deficiency (Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang deficiency – predominance of Kidney-Yin deficiency)
6. Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang deficiency – predominance of Kidney-Yang deficiency
7. Kidney-Qi not firm
8. Kidneys failing to receive Qi
9. Kidney-Essence deficiency
10. Kidney-Yang deficiency, Water overflowing
11. Kidney-Yin deficiency, Empty Heat blazing
12. Kidney-Yin Deficiency with Phlegm
13. Combined Patterns
14. Kidney-Yin and Liver-Yin deficiency
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16. Kidney and Heart not harmonized (Kidney-Yin and Heart-Yin deficiency with Heart Empty-Heat)
17. Kidney-Yin and Lung-Yin deficiency
18. Kidney-Yin and Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty-Heat
19. Kidney-Yang and Spleen-Yang deficiency

1. KIDNEY-QI DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Diminished hearing, dizziness, tinnitus, backache, frequent urination, urination at night, premature ejaculation, heavy periods.

Tongue: slightly Pale.

Pulse: Weak on the right-Rear position.

ii) Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, Du-4 Mingmen, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, KI-3 Taixi, KI-7 Fuli. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Qing E Wan *Young Maiden Pill*.

2. KIDNEY-YANG DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Lower backache, cold and weak knees, sensation of cold in the lower back, feeling cold, dizziness,

tinnitus, weak legs, bright-white complexion, tiredness, abundant-clear urination, urination at night, apathy, oedema of the legs, infertility in women, loose stools, impotence, premature ejaculation, low sperm count, decreased libido.

Tongue: Pale and wet.

Pulse: Deep-Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, Du-4 Mingmen, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Qixue, Ren-6 Qihai, KI-3 Taixi, KI-7 Fuli, BL-52 Zhishi, Jinggong extra point (0.5 cm lateral to BL-52 Zhishi). Moxa must be used.

iii) Prescription

You Gui Wan *Restoring the Right [Kidney] Pill*.

Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan *Golden Chest Kidney-Qi Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Strengthen the Root (variation of You Gui Wan).

3. KIDNEY-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, ache in bones, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, nocturnal emissions, premature ejaculation, tiredness, slight anxiety.

Tongue: normal-coloured without coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi, KI-13 Qixue, KI-6 Zhaohai, KI-10 Yingu, KI-9 Zhubin, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-7 Yinjiao, LU-7 Lieque and KI-6 Zhaohai in combination (opening points of the Directing Vessel).

iii) Prescription

Zuo Gui Wan *Restoring the Left [Kidney] Pill*.

Liu Wei Di Huang Wan *Six-Ingredient Rehmanniae Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Nourish the Root (variation of Zuo Gui Wan).

4. KIDNEY-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH EMPTY HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth at night, five-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, lower backache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions with dreams, constipation, dark-scanty urine, infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, anxiety, insomnia, excessive menstrual bleeding.

Tongue: Red without coating; in severe cases also cracked.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and slightly Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi, KI-13 Qixue, KI-6 Zhaohai, KI-10 Yingu, KI-9 Zhubin, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-7 Yinjiao, LU-7 Lieque and KI-6 Zhaohai in combination (opening points of the Directing Vessel), KI-2 Rangu, HE-6 Yinxi.

iii) Prescription

Zhi Bo Di Huang Wan *Anemarrhena-Phellodendron-Rehmanniae Pill*.

Da Bu Yin Wan *Great Tonifying Yin Pill*.

Er Zhi Wan *Two Solstices Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Nourish the Root (variation of Zuo Gui Wan).

5. KIDNEY-YANG AND KIDNEY-YIN DEFICIENCY (KIDNEY-YIN AND KIDNEY-YANG DEFICIENCY – PREDOMINANCE OF KIDNEY-YIN DEFICIENCY)

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, tinnitus, vertigo, poor memory, hardness of hearing, night-sweating, dry mouth and throat at night, lower backache, ache in bones, nocturnal emissions,

infertility, premature ejaculation, tiredness, slight anxiety, cold feet, abundant-pale urine.

Tongue: normal-coloured without coating or with rootless coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty or Weak on both Kidney positions.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, KI-10 Yingu, KI-9 Zhubin, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-7 Yinjiao, LU-7 Lieque and KI-6 Zhaohai in combination (opening points of the Directing Vessel). Moderate use of moxa is applicable, for example, moxa on the needle on KI-3 Taixi.

iii) Prescription

Zuo Gui Wan *Restoring the Left [Kidney] Pill* plus Ba Ji Tian *Radix Morindae officinalis*.

iv) Three Treasures

Nourish the Root (variation of Zuo Gui Wan).

6. KIDNEY-YIN AND KIDNEY-YANG DEFICIENCY – PREDOMINANCE OF KIDNEY-YANG DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Lower backache, cold knees, sensation of cold in the back, feeling cold in general but also occasionally hot in the face, menopausal hot flushes, night-sweating, weak legs, bright-white complexion, weak knees, impotence, premature ejaculation, low sperm count, cold and thin sperm, decreased libido, tiredness, abundant-clear urination or scanty-clear urination, urination at night, apathy, oedema of the legs, infertility in women, loose stools, depression.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Deep-Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, Du-4 Mingmen, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, KI-3 Taixi, KI-7 Fuliu, BL-52 Zhishi, Jinggong extra point (0.5 cm lateral to BL-52 Zhishi). Moxa is applicable, but less than in Kidney-Yang deficiency.

iii) Prescription

You Gui Wan *Restoring the Right [Kidney] Pill* plus Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* and Tian Men Dong *Tuber Asparagi cochinchinensis*.

iv) Three Treasures

Strengthen the Root (variation of You Gui Wan).

7. KIDNEY-QI NOT FIRM

i) Clinical manifestations

Soreness and weakness of the lower back, weak knees, clear-frequent urination, weak-stream urination, abundant urination, dribbling after urination, incontinence of urine, enuresis, urination at night, nocturnal emissions without dreams, premature ejaculation, spermatorrhoea, in women prolapse of uterus, chronic white vaginal discharge, tiredness, a bearing-down feeling in the lower abdomen, recurrent miscarriage, feeling cold, cold limbs.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Deep-Weak, especially in the Rear positions.

ii) Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, Du-4 Mingmen, KI-3 Taixi, KI-13 Qixue, BL-52 Zhishi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Jinggong extra point, Ren-6 Qihai, Du-20 Baihui, BL-32 Ciliao. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

You Gui Yin *Restoring the Right [Kidney] Decoction* plus Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* and Qian Shi *Semen Euryales ferocis*.

Jin Suo Gu Jing Wan *Metal Lock Consolidating the Essence Pill*.

Fu Tu Dan *Poria-Cuscuta Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Strengthen the Root (variation of You Gui Wan).

8. KIDNEYS FAILING TO RECEIVE QI

i) Clinical manifestations

Shortness of breath on exertion, rapid and weak breathing, difficulty in inhaling, chronic cough and/or asthma,

spontaneous sweating, cold limbs, cold limbs after sweating, swelling of the face, thin body, mental listlessness, clear urination during asthma attack, lower backache, dizziness, tinnitus.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Deep-Weak-Tight.

ii) Acupuncture

KI-7 Fuliu, KI-3 Taixi, LU-7 Lieque and KI-6 Zhaohai in combination (opening points of the Directing Vessel), BL-23 Shenshu, Du-4 Mingmen, Ren-6 Qihai, Ren-17 Shanzhong, KI-25 Shencang, Du-12 Shenzhu, BL-13 Feishu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Qixue. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

You Gui Yin *Restoring the Right [Kidney] Decoction* plus Dong Chong Xia Cao *Sclerotium Cordicipitis chinensis* and Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis*.

Shen Ge San *Ginseng-Gecko Powder*.

Su Zi Jiang Qi Tang *Perilla-Seed Subduing Qi Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Strengthen the Root (variation of You Gui Wan).

Herbal Sentinel – Yang (no classic antecedent).

9. KIDNEY-ESSENCE DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

In children: poor bone development, late closure of fontanelle, deafness, mental dullness.

In adults: softening of bones, weakness of knees and legs, poor memory, loose teeth, falling hair or premature greying of hair, weakness of sexual activity, lower backache, infertility in women, sterility in men, primary amenorrhoea, dizziness, tinnitus, deafness, blurred vision, absent-mindedness, decreased mental sharpness.

Tongue: without coating if this pattern occurs against a background of Kidney-Yin deficiency; Pale if against a background of Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Pulse: Floating-Empty or Leather.

ii) Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Qixue, BL-23 Shenshu, Du-4 Mingmen, G.B.-39 Xuanzhong,

Du-20 Baihui, Du-14 Dazhui, BL-15 Xinshu, BL-11 Dashu, Du-17 Naohu, Du-16 Fengfu.

iii) Prescription

Zuo Gui Yin *Restoring the Left [Kidney] Decoction*.

Zuo Gui Wan *Restoring the Left [Kidney] Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Nourish the Root (Variation of Zuo Gui Wan).

10. KIDNEY-YANG DEFICIENCY, WATER OVERFLOWING

i) Clinical manifestations

Oedema, especially of the legs and ankles, cold feeling in legs and back, fullness and distension of abdomen, soreness of lower back, feeling cold, scanty-clear urination.

1. Water overflowing to the Heart: the above symptoms plus palpitations, breathlessness, cold hands.

2. Water overflowing to the Lungs: the above symptoms plus thin-watery-frothy sputum, cough, asthma and breathlessness on exertion.

Tongue: Pale, Swollen and wet with a white coating.

Pulse: Deep-Weak-Slow.

ii) Acupuncture

Du-4 Mingmen, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, BL-20 Pishu, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-28 Shuidao, SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-7 Fuliu.

1. For Water overflowing to the Heart: Du-14 Dazhui (moxa), BL-15 Xinshu.

2. For Water overflowing to the Lungs: LU-7 Lieque, BL-13 Feishu, Du-12 Shenzhu.

iii) Prescription

Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan *Golden Chest Kidney-Qi Pill* plus Wu Ling San *Five 'Ling' Powder*.

11. KIDNEY-YIN DEFICIENCY, EMPTY HEAT BLAZING

i) Clinical manifestations

Malar flush, mental restlessness, night-sweating, low-grade fever, afternoon fever, feeling of heat in the afternoon and/or evening, insomnia, scanty-dark

urine, blood in the urine, dry throat especially at night, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, excessive sexual desire, dry stools.

Tongue: Red, red tip, without coating, cracks.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, KI-2 Rangu, KI-9 Zhubin, Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-10 Yingu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, HE-5 Tongli, LU-7 Lieque, LU-10 Yuji, HE-6 Yinxi, Du-24 Shenting, LI-11 Quchi.

iii) Prescription

Liu Wei Di Huang Wan *Six-Ingredient Rehmanniae Pill* plus Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii radices* and Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloides*.

iv) Three Treasures

Nourish the Root (variation of Zuo Gui Wan).

12. KIDNEY-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH PHLEGM

i) Clinical manifestations

Sputum in the throat, bouts of dry cough followed by expectoration of scanty sputum, breathlessness, feeling of oppression in the chest, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, night-sweating.

Tongue: Red with rootless, sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and slightly Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, Ren-4 Guanyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-9 Yinlingquan, KI-6 Zhaohai, ST-40 Fenglong, Ren-9 Shuifen, Ren-5 Shimen, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

iii) Prescription

Zuo Gui Wan *Restoring the Left [Kidney] Pill* plus Bei Mu Gua Lou Tang *Fritillaria-Trichosanthes Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Nourish the Root (variation of Zuo Gui Wan) plus *Limpid Sea* (variation of Er Chen Tang).

13. COMBINED PATTERNS

The Combined Patterns of the Kidneys are:

- Kidney-Yin and Liver-Yin deficiency
- Kidney-Yin and Liver-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
- Kidney and Heart not Harmonized
- Kidney-Yin and Lung-Yin deficiency
- Kidney-Yin and Lung-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
- Kidney-Yang and Spleen-Yang deficiency

14. KIDNEY-YIN AND LIVER-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, dry throat, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, nocturnal emissions, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, delayed cycle, infertility.

Tongue: normal-coloured without coating or with rootless coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, LIV-8 Ququan, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-13 Qixue, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Zuo Gui Wan *Restoring the Left [Kidney] Pill*.

Qi Ju Di Huang Wan *Lycium-Chrysanthemum-Rehmanniae Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Nourish the Root (variation of Zuo Gui Wan).

15. KIDNEY-YIN AND LIVER-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH EMPTY-HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, dull occipital or vertical headache, insomnia, numbness or tingling of limbs, dry eyes, blurred vision, lower

backache, dry throat at night, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, dry hair and skin, brittle nails, dry vagina, night-sweating, dry stools, nocturnal emissions, scanty menstruation or amenorrhoea, delayed cycle, infertility, five-palm heat, a feeling of heat in the evening, malar flush, menopausal hot flushes.

Tongue: Red without coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and slightly Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, LIV-8 Ququan, Ren-4 Guanyuan, BL-23 Shenshu, KI-13 Qixue, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-2 Rangu, L.I.-11 Quchi, HE-6 Yinxi, LIV-2 Xingjian.

iii) Prescription

Liu Wei Di Huang Wan *Six-Ingredient Rehmanniae Pill* plus Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii radidis* and Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloides*.

16. KIDNEY AND HEART NOT HARMONIZED (KIDNEY-YIN AND HEART-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH HEART EMPTY-HEAT)

i) Clinical manifestations

Palpitations, mental restlessness, insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, anxiety, poor memory, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, lower backache, nocturnal emissions with dreams, a feeling of heat in the evening, dry throat at night, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, night-sweating, five-palm heat, scanty-dark urine, dry stools.

Tongue: Red with redder tip without coating, mid-line Heart crack.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and Rapid or Deep-Weak on both Rear positions and relatively Overflowing on both Front positions.

ii) Acupuncture

HE-7 Shenmen, HE-6 Yinxi, HE-5 Tongli, Yintang extra point, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-15 Jiuwei, Du-24 Shenting, KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, KI-10 Yingu, KI-9 Zhubin, Ren-4 Guanyuan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Tian Wang Bu Xin Dan *Heavenly Emperor Tonifying the Heart Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Heavenly Empress (variation of Tian Wang Bu Xin Dan).

17. KIDNEY-YIN AND LUNG-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Dry cough which is worse in the evening, dry throat and mouth, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower backache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination.

Tongue: normal-coloured without coating or with rootless coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty.

ii) Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, LU-7 Lieque and KI-6 Zhaohai in combination (opening points of the Directing Vessel), Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Qixue, LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-1 Zhongfu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-43 Gaohuangshu.

iii) Prescription

Ba Xian Chang Shou Wan *Eight Immortals Longevity Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Herbal Sentinel – Yin (no classic antecedent).

18. KIDNEY-YIN AND LUNG-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH EMPTY-HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Dry cough which is worse in the evening, dry throat and mouth at night, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, thin body, breathlessness on exertion, lower backache, night-sweating, dizziness, tinnitus, hardness of hearing, scanty urination, feeling of heat in the evening, five-palm heat, malar flush.

Tongue: Red without coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty and slightly Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

KI-3 Taixi, KI-6 Zhaohai, LU-7 Lieque and KI-6 Zhaohai in combination (opening points of the Directing Vessel), Ren-4 Guanyuan, KI-13 Qixue, LU-9 Taiyuan, LU-1 Zhongfu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-43 Gaohuangshu, KI-2 Rangu, LU-10 Yuji, L.I.-11 Quchi.

iii) Prescription

Ba Xian Chang Shou Wan *Eight Immortals Longevity Pill* plus Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii radices*.

19. KIDNEY-YANG AND SPLEEN-YANG DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Lower backache, cold and weak knees, sensation of cold in the back, feeling cold, weak legs, bright-white complexion, impotence, premature ejaculation,

low sperm count, cold and thin sperm, decreased libido, tiredness, lassitude, abundant-clear urination, scanty-clear urination, urination at night, apathy, oedema of the legs, infertility in women, loose stools, depression, poor appetite, slight abdominal distension, desire to lie down, early-morning diarrhoea, chronic diarrhoea.

Tongue: Pale and wet.

Pulse: Deep-Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, Du-4 Mingmen, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-6 Qihai, KI-3 Taixi, KI-7 Fuli, BL-52 Zhishi, Jinggong extra point (0.5 cm lateral to BL-52 Zhishi), Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-9 Shuifen, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-25 Tianshu, BL-25 Dachangshu. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Li Zhong Wan *Regulating the Centre Pill* plus Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan *Golden Chest Kidney-Qi Pill*.

Small Intestine Patterns

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Full-Heat in the Small Intestine
 Small Intestine Qi pain
 Small Intestine Qi tied
 Small Intestine deficient and Cold
 Infestation of worms in the Small Intestine

The patterns discussed are:

1. Full-Heat in the Small Intestine
2. Small Intestine Qi pain
3. Small Intestine Qi tied
4. Small Intestine deficient and Cold
5. Infestation of worms in the Small Intestine

1. FULL-HEAT IN THE SMALL INTESTINE

i) Clinical manifestations

Mental restlessness, insomnia, tongue and/or mouth ulcers, pain in the throat, deafness, uncomfortable feeling and heat sensation in the chest, abdominal pain, thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, scanty and dark urine, burning pain on urination, blood in urine.

Tongue: Red with redder and swollen tip, yellow coating.

Pulse: Overflowing-Rapid, especially on the Front position. If there are urinary symptoms, the pulse would be Wiry on the left-Rear position.

ii) Acupuncture

S.I.-2 Qianggu, S.I.-5 Yanggu, HE-5 Tongli, HE-8 Shaofu, ST-39 Xiajuxu.

iii) Prescription

Dao Chi San *Eliminating Redness Powder*.

Dao Chi Qing Xin Tang *Eliminating Redness and Clearing the Heart Decoction*.

2. SMALL INTESTINE QI PAIN

i) Clinical manifestations

Lower abdominal twisting pain which may extend to back, abdominal distension, dislike of pressure on abdomen, borborygmi, flatulence, abdominal pain relieved by emission of wind, pain in the testis.

Tongue: white coating.

Pulse: Deep-Wiry, especially on the Rear positions.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-6 Qihai, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, LIV-13 Zhangmen, ST-27 Daju, ST-29 Guilai, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-3 Taichong, ST-39 Xiajuxu.

iii) Prescription

Chai Hu Shu Gan Tang *Bupleurum Soothing the Liver Decoction*.

3. SMALL INTESTINE QI TIED

i) Clinical manifestations

Violent abdominal pain, dislike of pressure, abdominal distension, constipation, vomiting, borborygmi, flatulence.

Tongue: thick-white coating.

Pulse: Deep-Wiry.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-39 Xiajuxu, extra point Lanweixue, Ren-6 Qihai, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, ST-25 Tianshu, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-3 Taichong.

iii) Prescription

Zhi Shi Dao Zhi Wan *Citrus Eliminating Stagnation Pill*.
 Tian Tai Wu Yao San *Top-Quality Lindera Powder*.

4. SMALL INTESTINE DEFICIENT AND COLD

i) Clinical manifestations

Dull abdominal pain alleviated by pressure, desire for hot drinks, borborygmi, diarrhoea, pale and abundant urination, cold limbs.

Tongue: Pale body, white coating.

Pulse: Deep-Weak-Slow.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-6 Qihai, ST-25 Tianshu, ST-39 Xiajuxu, ST-36 Zusanli, BL-20 Pishu, BL-27 Xiaochangshu. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Xiao Jian Zhong Tang *Small Strengthening the Centre Decoction*.

Shen Ling Bai Zhu San *Ginseng-Poria-Atractylodes Powder*.

Roundworms (ascarid): abdominal pain, vomiting of roundworms, cold limbs.

Hookworms: desire to eat strange objects such as soil, wax, uncooked rice or tea leaves.

Pinworms: itchy anus, worse in the evening.

Tapeworms: constant hunger.

ii) Acupuncture

Acupuncture is not applicable in this pattern.

iii) Prescription

Li Zhong An Hui Tang *Regulating the Centre and Calming Roundworms Decoction*.

Lian Mei An Hui Tang *Picrorhiza-Mume Calming Roundworms Decoction*.

Hua Chong Wan *Dissolving Parasites Pill*.

Qu Tiao Tang *Expelling Tapeworms Decoction*.

5. INFESTATION OF WORMS IN THE SMALL INTESTINE

i) Clinical manifestations

Abdominal pain and distension, bad taste in mouth, sallow complexion.



Note that some of the symptoms in this pattern are due to the Small Intestine channel (tongue and/or mouth ulcers, pain in the throat, deafness, uncomfortable feeling and heat sensation in the chest) and some to the Small Intestine organ and its relationship with the Bladder (scanty and dark urine, burning pain on urination, blood in urine).

Stomach Patterns

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Stomach-Qi deficiency
Stomach deficient and Cold (Stomach-Yang deficiency)
Stomach-Yin deficiency
Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
Deficiency of Stomach-Yin and Stomach-Yang
Stomach-Qi stagnation
Blood stasis in the Stomach
Stomach-Heat
Stomach-Fire
Stomach Phlegm-Fire
Stomach Damp-Heat
Cold invading the Stomach
Stomach-Qi rebelling upwards
Retention of food in the Stomach

The patterns discussed are:

1. Stomach-Qi deficiency
2. Stomach deficient and cold (Stomach-Yang deficiency)
3. Stomach-Yin deficiency
4. Stomach-Yin deficiency with Empty Heat
5. Deficiency of Stomach-Yin and Stomach-Yang
6. Stomach-Qi stagnation
7. Blood stasis in the Stomach
8. Stomach-Heat
9. Stomach-Fire
10. Stomach Phlegm-Fire
11. Stomach Damp-Heat
12. Cold invading the Stomach
13. Stomach-Qi rebelling upwards
14. Retention of food in the Stomach

1. STOMACH-QI DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

Uncomfortable feeling in the epigastrium, no appetite, lack of taste sensation, loose stools, tiredness especially in the morning, weak limbs.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Empty, especially on the Right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-21 Weishu, Ren-6 Qihai. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Si Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Prosperous Earth (variation of Liu Jun Zi Tang).

2. STOMACH DEFICIENT AND COLD (STOMACH-YANG DEFICIENCY)

i) Clinical manifestations

Discomfort or dull pain in the epigastrium, better after eating and better with pressure or massage, no appetite, preference for warm drinks and foods, vomiting of clear fluid, no thirst, cold and weak limbs, tiredness, pale complexion.

Tongue: Pale and wet.

Pulse: Deep-Weak-Slow, especially on the Right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-36 Zusanli, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, Ren-6 Qihai. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Huang Qi Jian Zhong Tang *Astragalus Strengthening the Centre Decoction*.

Xiao Jian Zhong Tang *Small Strengthening the Centre Decoction*.

3. STOMACH-YIN DEFICIENCY

i) Clinical manifestations

No appetite or slight hunger but no desire to eat, constipation (dry stools); dull or slightly burning epigastric pain; dry mouth and throat, especially in the afternoon; slight feeling of fullness after eating.

Tongue: No coating in the centre, or with rootless coating; normal body colour; scattered Stomach cracks or central Stomach crack.

Pulse: Floating-Empty on the Right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-3 Taibai.

iii) Prescription

Sha Shen Mai Dong Tang *Glehnia-Opheopogan Decoction*.
Shen Ling Bai Zhu San *Ginseng-Poria-Atractylodus Powder*.

Yi Wei Tang *Benefitting the Stomach Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Central Mansion (variation of Shen Ling Bai Zhu San).

4. STOMACH-YIN DEFICIENCY WITH EMPTY HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Dull or burning epigastric pain, feeling of heat in the afternoon, constipation (dry stools), dry mouth and throat especially in the afternoon, thirst with desire to drink in small sips, feeling of hunger but no desire to eat, slight feeling of fullness after eating, night-sweating, five-palm heat, bleeding gums, feeling of heat in the evening.

Tongue: Red and without coating in the centre, scattered Stomach cracks, or central Stomach crack

Pulse: Floating-Empty on the Right-Middle position and slightly Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-3 Taibai, ST-44 Neiting, ST-21 Liangmen, L.I.-11 Quchi.

iii) Prescription

Sha Shen Mai Dong Tang plus Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloides* and Shi Hu *Herba Dendrobii*.

5. DEFICIENCY OF STOMACH-YIN AND STOMACH-YANG

i) Clinical manifestations

Dull or burning epigastric pain, dry throat and mouth, poor appetite, sour regurgitation, tiredness, sweating, night-sweating, five-palm heat, cold fingers.

Tongue: Red in the centre without coating.

Pulse: Floating-Empty.

This is essentially a Stomach-Yin deficiency which has developed from a Stomach-Yang deficiency.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-3 Taibai, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-44 Neiting. Generally, no moxa but moxa on the needle on ST-36 may be used.

iii) Prescription

Si Jun Zi Tang *Four Gentlemen Decoction* or Huang Qi Jian Zhong Tang *Astragalus Strengthening the Centre Decoction* combined with Yi Wei Tang *Benefitting the Stomach Decoction* or Sha Shen Mai Dong Tang *Glehnia-Opheopogan Decoction*.

6. STOMACH-QI STAGNATION

i) Clinical manifestations

Epigastric pain and distension, belching, nausea, vomiting, hiccup, irritability.

Tongue: No particular signs on the tongue except that in severe cases it may be Red on the sides in the central section.

Pulse: Wiry on the Right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-34 Liangqiu, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-19 Burong, KI-21 Youmen, T.B.-6 Zhigou, P-6 Neiguan, SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan (opening points of the Penetrating Vessel), G.B.-34 Yanglingquan with Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong.

iii) Prescription

Chen Xiang Jiang San *Aquilaria Subduing Qi Powder*.

Ban Xia Hou Po Tang *Pinellia-Magnolia Decoction*.

Zuo Jin Wan *Left Metal Pill*.

iv) Three Treasures

Open the Heart (variation of Ban Xia Hou Po Tang).

7. BLOOD STASIS IN THE STOMACH

i) Clinical manifestations

Severe, stabbing epigastric pain that may be worse at night; dislike of pressure; nausea; vomiting; possibly vomiting of blood; vomiting of food looking like coffee-grounds.

Tongue: Purple.

Pulse: Wiry.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-34 Liangqiu, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-19 Burong, KI-21 Youmen, T.B.-6 Zhigou, P-6 Neiguan, SP-4 Gongsun with P-6 Neiguan (opening points of the Penetrating Vessel), G.B.-34 Yanglingquan with Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong, BL-17 Geshu, SP-10 Xuehai, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-11 Jianli.

iii) Prescription

Shi Xiao San *Breaking into a Smile Powder*.

Dan Shen Yin *Salvia Decoction*.

Ge Xia Zhu Yu Tang *Eliminating Stasis below the Diaphragm Decoction*.

Tong You Tang *Penetrating the Depth Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Stir Field of Elixir (variation of Ge Xia Zhu Yu Tang).

Red Stirring (variation of Xue Fu Zhu Yu Tang).

8. STOMACH-HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Burning epigastric pain, thirst, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat.

Tongue: Red in the centre with a yellow coating.

Pulse: Rapid and slightly Overflowing on the Right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, ST-34 Liangqiu, ST-21 Liangmen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-13 Shangwan, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-11 Jianli.

iii) Prescription

Bai Hu Tang *White Tiger Decoction*.

Yu Nu Jian *Jade Woman Decoction*.

Qing Wei San *Clearing the Stomach Powder*.

9. STOMACH-FIRE

i) Clinical manifestations

Burning epigastric pain, intense thirst with desire to drink cold liquids, mental restlessness, bleeding gums, dry stools, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat.

Tongue: Red in the centre with a dry-yellow or dark-yellow (or even black) coating.

Pulse: Rapid and slightly Overflowing on the Right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, ST-34 Liangqiu, ST-21 Liangmen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-13 Shangwan, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-11 Jianli, SP-15 Daheng.

iii) Prescription

Tiao Wei Cheng Qi Tang *Regulating the Stomach Conducting Qi Decoction*.

Qing Wei San *Clearing the Stomach Powder*.

Liang Ge San *Cooling the Diaphragm Powder*.

10. STOMACH PHLEGM-FIRE

i) Clinical manifestations

Burning epigastric pain, thirst without desire to drink, mental restlessness, bleeding gums, dry stools, dry mouth, mouth ulcers, sour regurgitation, nausea, vomiting soon after eating, excessive hunger, foul breath, a feeling of heat, a feeling of oppression of the chest and epigastrium, mucus in the stools, insomnia, excessive dreaming, expectoration of phlegm.

Tongue: Red in the centre with a sticky-yellow or dark-yellow (or even black) coating; Stomach crack with a rough, sticky-yellow coating inside it.

Pulse: Slippery-Rapid and slightly Overflowing on the Right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, ST-34 Liangqiu, ST-21 Liangmen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-13 Shangwan, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-11 Jianli, SP-15 Daheng, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-9 Shuifen, SP-6 Sanyinjiao.

iii) Prescription

Wen Dan Tang *Warming the Gall-Bladder Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Clear the Soul (variation of Wen Dan Tang).

11. STOMACH DAMP-HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

A feeling of fullness and pain of the epigastrium, a feeling of heaviness, facial pain, stuffed nose or thick-sticky nasal discharge, thirst without desire to drink, nausea, a feeling of heat, dull-yellow complexion, a sticky taste.

Tongue: Red tongue with sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-44 Neiting, ST-34 Liangqiu, ST-21 Liangmen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Ren-13 Shangwan, L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, Ren-11 Jianli, ST-25 Tianshu, ST-40 Fenglong, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-9 Shuifen.

iii) Prescription

Lian Po Yin *Coptis-Magnolia Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Ease the Muscles (variation of Lian Po Yin).

12. COLD INVADING THE STOMACH

i) Clinical manifestations

Sudden severe pain in the epigastrium, a feeling of cold, cold limbs, preference for warmth, vomiting of clear fluids (which may alleviate the pain), nausea, feeling worse after swallowing cold fluids which are quickly vomited, preference for warm liquids.

Tongue: Thick-white coating.

Pulse: Deep-Tight-Slow.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-21 Liangmen, SP-4 Gongsun, Ren-13 Shangwan, ST-34 Liangqiu. Moxa must be used.

iii) Prescription

Liang Fu Wan *Alpinia-Cyperus Pill*.

13. STOMACH-QI REBELLING UPWARDS

i) Clinical manifestations

Nausea, difficulty in swallowing, belching, vomiting, hiccup.

Tongue: No changes.

Pulse: Tight or Wiry on the Right-Middle position.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-13 Shangwan, Ren-10 Xiawan, P-6 Neiguan, SP-4 Gongsun, ST-21 Liangmen, ST-19 Burong.

iii) Prescription

Ding Xiang Shi Di Tang *Caryophyllum-Diospyros*
Decoction.

Huo Xiang Zheng Qi San *Agastaches Upright-Qi Powder*.
Ban Xia Hou Po Tang *Pinellia-Magnolia Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Buddha's Hand (variation of Mu Xiang Shun Qi Wan).

14. RETENTION OF FOOD IN THE STOMACH

i) Clinical manifestations

Fullness, pain and distension of the epigastrium which
are relieved by vomiting; nausea; vomiting of sour fluids;

foul breath; sour regurgitation; belching; insomnia; loose
stools or constipation; poor appetite.

Tongue: Thick coating (which could be white or yellow).

Pulse: Full-Slippy.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-13 Shangwan, Ren-10 Xiawan, ST-21 Liangmen,
ST-44 Neiting, ST-45 Lidui, SP-4 Gongsun, P-6 Neiguan,
ST-40 Fenglong, ST-19 Burong, KI-21 Youmen, Ren-12
Zhongwan.

iii) Prescription

Bao He Wan *Preserving and Harmonizing Pill*.

Zhi Shi Dao Zhi Wan *Citrus Eliminating Stagnation Pill*.

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Gall-Bladder Patterns

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver
Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder
Damp-Cold in the Gall-Bladder
Gall-Bladder Heat
Gall-Bladder deficient
Stagnation of the Gall-Bladder with Phlegm-Heat

The patterns discussed are:

1. Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder and Liver
 2. Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder
 3. Damp-Cold in the Gall-Bladder
 4. Gall-Bladder Heat
 5. Gall-Bladder deficient
 6. Stagnation of the Gall-Bladder with Phlegm-Heat
- For combined Liver and Gall-Bladder patterns, please refer to [Chapter 93](#), 'Liver patterns'.

1. DAMP-HEAT IN THE GALL-BLADDER AND LIVER

i) Clinical manifestations

Hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion, scanty and dark yellow urine, fever, thirst without desire to drink, bitter taste, dizziness, yellow sclera, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness of the body, numbness of the limbs, swelling of the feet, burning on urination, difficulty urinating, excessive vaginal discharge, loose stools or constipation, alternation of hot and cold feeling, feeling of heat, genital papular skin rashes and itching, swelling and heat of the scrotum.

Tongue: Thick-sticky-yellow coating, either bilateral or only on one side.

Pulse: Slippery-Wiry-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

G.B.-24 Riyue, LIV-14 Qimen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, extra point Dannangxue, Du-9 Zhiyang, BL-19 Danshu, BL-20 Pishu, L.I.-11 Quchi, T.B.-6 Zhigou, ST-19 Burong, LIV-3 Taichong, LIV-5 Ligou.

iii) Prescription

Long Dan Xie Gan Tang *Gentiana Draining the Liver Decoction*.

iv) Three Treasures

Drain Fire (variation of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang).

2. DAMP-HEAT IN THE GALL-BLADDER

i) Clinical manifestations

Hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion, scanty and dark yellow urine, fever, thirst without desire to drink, bitter taste, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness of the body, numbness of the limbs, swelling of the feet, loose stools or constipation, alternation of hot and cold feeling, yellow sclera, feeling of heat.

Tongue: Thick-sticky-yellow coating, either bilateral in two strips or unilateral.

Pulse: Slippery-Wiry-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

G.B.-24 Riyue, LIV-14 Qimen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, extra point Dannangxue, Du-9 Zhiyang, BL-19 Danshu, BL-20 Pishu, L.I.-11 Quchi, T.B.-6 Zhigou, ST-19 Burong.

iii) Prescription

Yin Chen Hao Tang *Artemesia Capillaris Decoction*.

3. DAMP-COLD IN THE GALL-BLADDER

i) Clinical manifestations

Jaundice, dull-yellow eyes and skin, hypochondrial pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, dull-yellow sclera, turbid urine, no thirst, sticky taste, dull headache, feeling of heaviness of the body, feeling of cold.

Tongue: Thick-sticky-white coating, either bilateral in two strips or unilateral.

Pulse: Slippery-Wiry-Slow.

ii) Acupuncture

G.B.-24 Riyue, LIV-14 Qimen, Ren-12 Zhongwan, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, extra point Dannangxue, Du-9 Zhiyang, BL-19 Danshu, BL-20 Pishu, T.B.-6 Zhigou, ST-19 Burong.

iii) Prescription

San Ren Tang *Three Seeds Decoction* plus Yin Chen Hao *Herba Artemisiae capillaris*.

4. GALL-BLADDER HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, tinnitus, bitter taste, dry throat, irritability, red face and ears, hypochondrial fullness.

Tongue: Unilateral or bilateral yellow coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

G.B.-24 Riyue, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, extra point Dannangxue, Du-9 Zhiyang, BL-19 Danshu, L.I.-11 Quchi, T.B.-6 Zhigou, ST-19 Burong, G.B.-43 Xiaxi.

iii) Prescription

Jin Ling Zi San *Melia Powder* combined with Zuo Jin Wan *Left Metal Pill*.

5. GALL-BLADDER DEFICIENT

i) Clinical manifestations

Dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, nervousness, timidity, propensity to being easily startled, lack of courage and initiative, indecision, sighing, waking up early in the morning, restless dreams.

Tongue: Pale or normal.

Pulse: Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

G.B.-40 Qiuxu. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Wen Dan Tang *Warming the Gall-Bladder Decoction*. This formula, originally by Sun Si-Miao, was used for irritability and insomnia deriving from Cold in the Gall-Bladder after a severe illness. The original formula omitted *Fu Ling* and contained *Sheng Jiang* in a larger dose (12 g).

An Shen Ding Zhi Wan *Calming the Spirit and Settling the Will-Power Pill*.

6. STAGNATION OF THE GALL-BLADDER WITH PHLEGM-HEAT

i) Clinical manifestations

Hypochondrial distension and pain, dizziness, blurred vision, irritability, insomnia, palpitations, a feeling of oppression of the chest and hypochondrium, sighing, slight breathlessness, excessive dreaming, bitter taste, nausea.

Tongue: Sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Wiry-Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

G.B.-24 Riyue, G.B.-34 Yanglingquan, SP-9 Yinglingquan, ST-19 Burong, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-40 Fenglong, LU-7 Lieque, T.B.-6 Zhigou, P-6 Neiguan, L.I.-11 Quchi.

iii) Prescription

Wen Dan Tang plus Yin Chen Hao *Herba Artemisiae capillaris*, Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* and Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi*.

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Large Intestine Patterns

CHAPTER CONTENTS

Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine
 Heat in the Large Intestine
 Heat obstructing the Large Intestine
 Cold invading the Large Intestine
 Large Intestine Dryness
 Large Intestine Cold
 Dampness in the Large Intestine
 Large Intestine deficient and Cold
 Large Intestine deficient and Damp
 Collapse of Large Intestine

The patterns discussed are:

1. Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine
2. Heat in the Large Intestine
3. Heat obstructing the Large Intestine
4. Cold invading the Large Intestine
5. Large Intestine Dryness
6. Large Intestine Cold
7. Dampness in the Large Intestine
8. Large Intestine deficient and Cold
9. Large Intestine deficient and Damp
10. Collapse of Large Intestine

1. DAMP-HEAT IN THE LARGE INTESTINE

i) Clinical manifestations

Abdominal pain that is not relieved by a bowel movement, diarrhoea, mucus and blood in stools, offensive odour of stools, burning in the anus, scanty-dark urine, fever, sweating which does not decrease the fever, a feeling of

heat, thirst without desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs.

Tongue: Red with sticky-yellow coating.

Pulse: Slippery-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, ST-25 Tianshu, ST-27 Daju, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-25 Dachangshu, L.I.-11 Quchi, Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-37 Shangjuxu, BL-20 Pishu.

iii) Prescription

Ge Gen Qin Lian Tang *Pueraria-Scutellaria-Coptis Decoction*.

Bai Tou Weng Tang *Pulsatilla Decoction*.

Shao Yao Tang *Paeonia Decoction*.

2. HEAT IN THE LARGE INTESTINE

i) Clinical manifestations

Constipation with dry stools, burning sensation in the mouth, dry tongue, burning and swelling in anus, scanty-dark urine.

Tongue: thick-yellow (or brown or black) dry coating.

Pulse: Full-Rapid.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-25 Tianshu, BL-25 Dachangshu, L.I.-11 Quchi, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-44 Neiting, L.I.-2 Erjian, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-6 Zhaohai.

iii) Prescription

Ma Zi Ren Wan *Cannabis Pill*.

3. HEAT OBSTRUCTING THE LARGE INTESTINE

i) Clinical manifestations

Constipation; burning in anus; abdominal distension and pain which is worse with pressure; high fever or tidal fever (fever that rises in the afternoon); sweating, especially on limbs; vomiting; thirst; delirium.

Tongue: Thick-dry-yellow (or brown-black) coating, Red body.

Pulse: Deep-Full.

ii) Acupuncture

L.I.-11 Quchi, L.I.-4 Hegu, SP-15 Daheng, T.B.-6 Zhigou, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, L.I.-2 Erjian, ST-44 Neiting, ST-25 Tianshu, BL-25 Dachangshu.

iii) Prescription

Tiao Wei Cheng Qi Tang *Regulating the Stomach Conducting Qi Decoction*.

4. COLD INVADING THE LARGE INTESTINE

i) Clinical manifestations

Sudden abdominal pain, diarrhoea with pain, feeling of cold, cold sensation in abdomen.

Tongue: thick-white coating.

Pulse: Deep-Wiry.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-25 Tianshu, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, LIV-3 Taichong, ST-27 Daju. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Liang Fu Wan *Alpinia Cyperus Pill* plus Zheng Qi Tian Xiang San *Upright Qi Heavenly Fragrance Powder*.

5. LARGE INTESTINE DRYNESS

i) Clinical manifestations

Dry stools which are difficult to discharge, dry mouth and throat, thin body, foul breath, dizziness.

Tongue: dry, either Pale or Red without coating.

Pulse: Fine.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-36 Zusanli, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, KI-6 Zhaohai, Ren-4 Guanyuan, ST-25 Tianshu.

iii) Prescription

Zeng Ye Tang *Increasing Fluids Decoction*.

Qing Zao Run Chang Tang *Clearing Dryness and Moistening the Intestines Decoction*.

Wu Ren Wan *Five Seeds Pill*.

Tian Di Jian *Heaven and Earth Decoction*.

Si Wu Ma Ren Wan *Four-Substance Cannabis Pill*.

Ma Zi Ren Wan *Cannabis Pill*.

6. LARGE INTESTINE COLD

i) Clinical manifestations

Loose stools like duck droppings, dull abdominal pain, borborygmi, pale urine, cold limbs.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Deep-Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-25 Tianshu, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-36 Zusanli, ST-37 Shangjuxu, BL-25 Dachangshu, BL-20 Pishu. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Liang Fu Wan *Alpinia Cyperus Pill*.

7. DAMPNES IN THE LARGE INTESTINE

i) Clinical manifestations

Abdominal distension and fullness, difficulty urinating, scanty urination, loose stools, borborygmi, a sticky sensation in the mouth, nausea, vomiting, mucus in the stools.

Tongue: Sticky-white coating.

Pulse: Soggy on the right-Rear position.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-25 Tianshu, BL-25 Dachangshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-27 Daju, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu.

iii) Prescription

Wei Ling Tang *Stomach 'Ling' Decoction*.

8. LARGE INTESTINE DEFICIENT AND COLD

i) Clinical Manifestations

Chronic dull abdominal pain that is alleviated by pressure, application of heat and ingestion of warm liquids; borborygmi; loose stools; in some cases constipation; cold limbs, especially legs; pale stools.

Tongue: Pale and wet.

Pulse: Deep-Weak especially on both Rear positions.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-25 Tianshu, BL-25 Dachangshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-27 Daju, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-36 Zusanli. Moxa should be used.

iii) Prescription

Fu Zi Li Zhong Wan *Aconitum Regulating the Centre Pill*.
Zhen Ren Yang Zang Tang *True Man Nourishing the Organs Decoction*.

9. LARGE INTESTINE DEFICIENT AND DAMP

i) Clinical manifestations

Dull abdominal pain that is alleviated by pressure and application of heat and aggravated by exposure to cold

or ingestion of cold foods, loose stools, possibly mucus in the stools, feeling of heaviness, incontinence of stools, abdominal fullness, tiredness.

Tongue: Pale with a sticky coating.

Pulse: Weak and slightly Slippery.

ii) Acupuncture

ST-25 Tianshu, BL-25 Dachangshu, ST-37 Shangjuxu, ST-27 Daju, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, SP-9 Yinlingquan, Ren-12 Zhongwan, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-36 Zusanli.

iii) Prescription

Shen Ling Bai Zhu San plus Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi*.

10. COLLAPSE OF LARGE INTESTINE

i) Clinical manifestations

Chronic diarrhoea, prolapse ani, haemorrhoids, tiredness after bowel movements, cold limbs, no appetite, mental exhaustion, desire to drink warm liquids, desire to have the abdomen massaged.

Tongue: Pale.

Pulse: Deep-Fine-Weak.

ii) Acupuncture

Ren-6 Qihai, ST-25 Tianshu, ST-36 Zusanli, SP-3 Taibai, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, Du-20 Baihui.

iii) Prescription

Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang *Tonifying the Centre Benefitting Qi Decoction*.

Bladder Patterns

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CHAPTER CONTENTS

Damp-Heat in the Bladder

Damp-Cold in the Bladder

Bladder deficient and Cold

The Bladder patterns discussed are:

1. Damp-Heat in the Bladder
2. Damp-Cold in the Bladder
3. Bladder deficient and Cold

For combined Kidney and Bladder patterns, please refer to [Chapter 95](#), 'Kidney patterns'.

1. DAMP-HEAT IN THE BLADDER

i) Clinical manifestations

Frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, difficult urination (stopping in the middle of flow), dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, blood in the urine, fever, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat.

Tongue: Thick-sticky-yellow coating on the root with red spots.

Pulse: Slippery-Rapid and slightly Wiry on the left-Rear position.

ii) Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, BL-28 Pangguangshu, Ren-3 Zhongji, BL-63 Jinmen, BL-66 Tonggu, ST-28 Shuidao.

iii) Prescription

Ba Zheng Tang *Eight Upright Powder*.

iv) Three Treasures

Separate Clear and Turbid (variation of Bi Xie Fen Qing Yin).

2. DAMP-COLD IN THE BLADDER

i) Clinical manifestations

Frequent and urgent urination, difficult urination (stopping in mid-stream), feeling of heaviness in hypogastrium and urethra, pale and turbid urine.

Tongue: white-sticky coating on root.

Pulse: Slippery-Slow and slightly Wiry on left-Rear position.

ii) Acupuncture

SP-9 Yinlingquan, SP-6 Sanyinjiao, BL-22 Sanjiaoshu, Ren-3 Zhongji, ST-28 Shuidao, Ren-9 Shuifen, BL-28 Pangguangshu. Moxa is applicable.

iii) Prescription

Ba Zheng San *Eight Upright Powder*.

Shi Wei San *Pyrrhosia Powder*.

Separate Clear and Turbid (variation of Bi Xie Fen Qing Yin).

3. BLADDER DEFICIENT AND COLD

i) Clinical manifestations

Frequent-pale-abundant urination, incontinence, enuresis, lower backache, dizziness, nocturia, white urethral discharge

Tongue: Pale, wet.

Pulse: Deep-Weak

ii) Acupuncture

BL-23 Shenshu, Du-4 Mingmen, BL-28 Pangguangshu, Ren-4 Guanyuan, Ren-3 Zhongji, Du-20 Baihui.

iii) Prescription

Suo Quan Wan *Contracting the Spring Pill*.
Sang Piao Xiao San *Ootheca Mantidis Pill*.
Tu Si Zi Wan *Cuscuta Pill*.



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Appendix 2: Prescriptions

Appendix 3: History of Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine

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Appendix 2

Prescriptions

NOTE

Please note that some of the herbs contained in the following prescriptions are banned for use in some countries. This may be either because they are toxic (in some cases wrongly perceived to be so) or because they are processed from endangered plants or endangered animal species; in some countries, no animal substances may be used at all. As the laws governing the use of these herbs (or animal substances) vary from country to country, it is the responsibility of readers to acquaint themselves with the laws of their country. The inclusion of such herbs in the prescriptions below does not imply an endorsement of their use. However, I have kept the prescriptions as they are in the original source texts because this allows us to make rational substitutions for the herbs (or animal substances) which cannot be used in the West. For example, the prescription Xi Jiao Di Huang Tang *Cornus Rhinoceri-Rehmannia Decoction* contains Xi Jiao *Cornu Rhinoceri*, rhinoceros horn, which is obviously illegal; as this substance has Blood-cooling properties, we can make a rational substitution with another herb that cools Blood.

AI FU NUAN GONG WAN

Artemisia-Cyperus Warming the Uterus Pill

Ai Ye *Folium Artemisiae argyi* 9 g
Wu Zhu Yu *Fructus Evodiae rutaecarpae* 4.5 g
Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 4.5 g
Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 9 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 6 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g
Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 6 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 9 g
Xu Duan *Radix Dipsaci asperi* 6 g

AN SHEN DING ZHI WAN

Calming the Spirit and Settling the Will-Power Pill

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g
Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae cocos paradisis* 9 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g
Yuan Zhi *Radix Polygalae tenuifoliae* 9 g
Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori graminei* 4.5 g
Long Chi *Dens Draconis* 4.5 g

BA XIAN CHANG SHOU WAN

Eight Immortals Longevity Pill

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g
Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 6 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 24 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 12 g
Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 12 g
Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 9 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 9 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

BA ZHEN TANG

Eight Precious Decoction

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 10 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici Chuanxiong* 5 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 8 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 15 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 3 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 10 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 8 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 5 g

BA ZHENG SAN

Eight Rectifications Powder

Mu Tong *Caulis Mutong* 3 g

Hua Shi *Talcum* 12 g

Che Qian Zi *Semen Plantaginis* 9 g

Qu Mai *Herba Dianthi* 6 g

Bian Xu *Herba Polygoni avicularis* 6 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 3 g

Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 6 g

Deng Xin Cao *Medulla Junci effusi* 3 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

BAI HE GU JIN TANG

Lilium Consolidating Metal Decoction

Bai He *Bulbus Lilii* 15 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 9 g

Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 9 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 9 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 6 g

Chuan Bei Mu *Bulbus Fritillariae cirrhosae* 6 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

BAI HU TANG

White Tiger Decoction

Shi Gao *Gypsum fibrosum* 30 g

Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

Geng Mi Non-glutinous rice 9 g

BAI TOU WENG TANG

Pulsatilla Decoction

Bai Tou Weng *Radix Pulsatillae chinensis* 6 g

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 9 g

Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 9 g

Qin Pi *Cortex Fraxini* 9 g

BAN XIA HOU PO TANG

Pinellia-Magnolia Decoction

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 12 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 9 g

Zi Su Ye *Folium Perillae frutescentis* 6 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 12 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 9 g

BAN XIA TANG

Pinelliae Decoction

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 12 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 3 slices

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 3 g

Wu Zhu Yu *Fructus Evodiae rutaecarpae* 3 g

Qiang Hu *Radix Peucedani* 6 g

Bie Jia *Carapacis Amydae sinensis* 9 g

Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 6 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 6 seeds

BAO HE WAN

Preserving and Harmonizing Pill

Shan Zha *Fructus Crataegi* 9 g

Shen Qu *Massa Fermentata medicinalis* 9 g

Lai Fu Zi *Semen Raphani sativi* 6 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 6 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae suspensae* 3 g

BAO YIN JIAN

Protecting Yin Decoction

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 24 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 15 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 12 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 12 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 9 g

Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 9 g

Xu Duan *Radix Dipsaci asperi* 6 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

BAO YUAN TANG

Preserving the Source Decoction

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 6 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 1.5 g

BEI MU GUA LOU SAN

Fritillaria-Trichosanthes Powder

Zhe Bei Mu *Bulbus Fritillariae thunbergii* 4.5 g

Gua Lou *Fructus Trichosanthis* 3 g

Tian Hua Fen *Radix Trichosanthis kirilowii* 2.4 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 2.4 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 2.4 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 2.4 g

BU FEI TANG

Tonifying the Lungs Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 24 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 24 g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 6 g

Zi Wan *Radix Asteris tatarici* 9 g

Sang Bai Pi *Cortex Mori albae radices* 12 g

BU GAN TANG

Tonifying the Liver Decoction

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici Chuanxiong* 6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 15 g

Suan Zao Ren *Semen Ziziphi spinosae* 6 g

Mu Gua *Fructus Chaenomeles lagenariae* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

BU SHEN GU CHONG WAN

Tonifying the Kidneys and Consolidating the Penetrating Vessel Pill

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 6 g

Xu Duan *Radix Dipsaci asperi* 6 g

Ba Ji Tian *Radix Morindae officinalis* 6 g

Du Zhong *Cortex Eucommiae ulmoidis* 6 g

Lu Jiao Shuang *Cornu Cervi degelatinatum* 6 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 9 g

E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 6 g

Dang Shen *Radix Codonopsis pilosulae* 6 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 9 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 3 dates

Sha Ren *Fructus seu Semen Amomi* 3 g

BU SHEN YANG XUE TANG

Tonifying the Kidneys and Nourishing Blood Decoction

Yin Yang Huo *Herba Epimedi* 6 g

Xian Mao *Rhizoma Curculiginis orchoidis* 6 g

Zi He Che *Placenta Hominis* 6 g

Nu Zhen Zi *Fructus Ligustri lucidi* 6 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

Dang Shen *Radix Codonopsis pilosulae* 6 g

Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii* 6 g

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 6 g

Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 3 g

BU ZHONG YI QI TANG

Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 12 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 9 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 6 g

Sheng Ma *Rhizoma Cimicifugae* 3 g

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 3 g

CANG ER BI DOU YAN FANG

Xanthium Sinusitis Formula

Cang Er Zi *Fructus Xanthii sibirici* 9 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 9 g

Pu Gong Ying *Herba Taraxaci mongolici cum radice* 6 g

Ge Gen *Radix Puerariae* 9 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 6 g

Bai Zhi *Radix Angelicae dahuricae* 3 g

Che Qian Zi *Semen Plantaginis* 6 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

CANG FU DAO TAN WAN

Atractylodes-Cyperus Conducting Phlegm Pill

Cang Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis lanceae* 9 g

Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 9 g

Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 9 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 6 g

Dan Nan Xing *Pulvis Arisaemae cum felle bovis* 4.5 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g
Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 3 slices
Shen Qu *Massa Fermentata medicinalis* 6 g

CHAI HU SHU GAN TANG

Bupleurum Pacifying the Liver Decoction

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 6 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 4.5 g
Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 4.5 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 1.5 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 6 g
Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 4.5 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici Chuanxiong* 4.5 g

CHANG TAI BAI ZHU SAN

Long [Life] Fetus Atractylodes Powder

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici Chuanxiong* 3 g
Chuan Jiao *Pericarpium Zanthoxyli bungeani* 3 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 6 g
E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii Asini* 6 g
Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 9 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g

CHEN XIANG JIANG QI TANG (STOMACH-QI STAGNATION)

Aquilaria Descending Qi Decoction

Chen Xiang *Lignum Aquilariae* 9 g
Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 6 g
Sha Ren *Fructus seu Semen Amomi* 3 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

DA BU YIN WAN

Great Tonifying Yin Pill (Dosages for batch of pills)

Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis* 120 g
Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 120 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 180 g
Gui Ban *Plastrum Testudinis* 180 g
Pig's bone-marrow 12 g

DA BU YUAN JIAN

Great Tonifying the Original [Qi] Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 3 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 6 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g
Du Zhong *Cortex Eucommiae ulmoidis* 6 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 3 g
Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 6 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

DA DING FENG ZHU

Big Stopping Wind Pearl

Ji Zi Huang Egg yolk 2 yolks
E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 9 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 18 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 12 g
Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 6 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 18 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 18 g
Huo Ma Ren *Semen Cannabis sativae* 6 g
Gui Ban *Plastrum Testudinis* 12 g
Bie Jia *Carapax Amydae sinensis* 12 g
Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 12 g

DAN SHEN YIN

Salvia Decoction

Dan Shen *Radix Salviae miltiorrhizae* 30 g
Tan Xiang *Lignum Santali albi* 4.5 g
Sha Ren *Fructus seu Semen et Pericarpium amomi* 4.5 g

DAN ZHI XIAO YAO SAN

Moutan-Gardenia Free and Easy Wanderer Powder

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 3 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 3 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 3 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 3 g
Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 34 g
Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 3 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 1.5 g
Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 1.5 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 1.5 g

DANG GUI SHAO YAO SAN

Angelica and Peony powder

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 15 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 12 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 12 g
Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 12 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici Chuanxiong* 6 g

DANG GUI SI NI TANG

Angelica Four Rebellious Decoction
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g
Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 9 g
Xi Xin *Herba cum Radice Asari* 3 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g
Da Zao *Fructus Zizyphi jujubae* 6 dates
Mu Tong *Caulis Mutong* 3 g

DANG GUI JI XUE TENG TANG

Angelica-Ji Xue Teng Decoction
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 15 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 15 g
Long Yan Rou *Arillus Euphoriae longanae* 6 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g
Dan Shen *Radix Salviae miltiorrhizae* 9 g
Ji Xue Teng *Radix et Caulis Jixueteng* 15 g

DANG GUI LONG HUI WAN

Angelica Dragon Aloe Pill
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Long Dan Cao *Radix Gentianae scabrae* 6 g
Lu Hui *Herba Aloes* 6 g
Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 4.5 g
Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 3 g
Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 6 g
Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 6 g
Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 6 g
Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 3 g

DANG GUI GUI ZHI TANG

Angelica-Ramulus Cinnamomi Decoction
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 1 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 3 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 0.6 g
Pao Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* (fried) 2 slices
Da Zao *Fructus Zizyphi jujubae* 3 dates

DAO CHI QING XIN TANG

Conducting Redness and Clearing the Heart Decoction
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 6 g
Mu Tong *Caulis Mutong* 3 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g
Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae cocos paradicis* 6 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 6 g
Lian Zi Xin *Plumula Nelumbinis nuciferae* 6 g
Hua Shi *Talcum* 6 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g
Hu Po *Succinum* 3 g
Zhu Ye *Herba Lophatheri gracilis* 6 g

DAO CHI SAN

Conducting Redness Powder
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 15 g
Mu Tong *Caulis Mutong* 3 g
Zhu Ye *Herba Lophatheri gracilis* 3 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

DI SHENG TANG

Supporting the Sage Decoction
Chi Shao *Radix Paeoniae rubra* 6 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 6 g
Ze Lan *Herba Lycopi lucidi* 6 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g
Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 3 slices
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

DI TAN TANG

Scouring Phlegm Decoction
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 6.6 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 6 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g
Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 6 g
Zhu Ru *Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis* 2.1 g
Dan Nan Xing *Pulvis Arisaemae cum felle bovis* 6.6 g

Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori graminei* 3 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 3 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 1.5 g

DING XIANG SHI DI TANG

Caryophyllum-Diospyros Decoction

Ding Xiang *Flos Caryophylli* 6 g

Shi Di *Calyx Diospyri Kaki* 6 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 3 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 6 g

DUO MING SAN

Seizing Life Powder

Mo Yao *Myrrha* 6 g

Xue Jie *Sanguis Draconis* 6 g

E JIAO JI ZI HUANG TANG

Gelatinum Corii Asini-Egg Yolk Decoction

E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii Asini* 6 g

Ji Zi Huang Egg yolk 2 yolks

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 12 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 1.5 g

Gou Teng *Ramulus Uncariae* 6 g

Shi Jue Ming *Concha Haliotidis* 15 g

Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 12 g

Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae cocos paradisis* 12 g

Luo Shi Teng *Caulis Trachelospermi jasminoides* 9 g

EMPIRICAL PRESCRIPTION BY DR CHEN JIA XU FOR LIVER-QI DEFICIENCY

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 6 g

Dang Shen *Radix Codonopsis pilosulae* 6 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 3 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 4 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 3 g

Bai Zi Ren *Semen Biotae orientalis* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

ER CHEN TANG

Two Old Decoction

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 15 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 15 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

ER ZHI WAN

Two ultimate Pill

Nu Zhen Zi *Fructus Ligustri lucidi* 9 g

Han Lian Cao *Herba Ecliptae prostratae* 9 g

FO SHOU SAN

Buddha's Hand Powder

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici Chuanxiong* 4 g

FU TU DAN

Poria-Cuscuta Pill (Dosages for batch of pills)

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 150 g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 210 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 60 g

Lian Zi *Semen Nelumbinis nuciferae* 60 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 90 g

FU ZI LI ZHONG WAN

Aconitum Regulating the Centre Pill

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 3 g

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 6 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

GAN CAO GAN JIANG TANG

Glycyrrhiza-Zingiber Decoction

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 12 g

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 6 g

GAN LU XIAO DU DAN

Sweet Dew Eliminating Toxin Pill

Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae suspensae* 6 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 6 g

Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 3 g

She Gan *Rhizoma Belamcandae chinensis* 4.5 g
Chuan Bei Mu *Bulbus Fritillariae cirrhosae* 3 g
Hua Shi *Talcum* 9 g
Mu Tong *Caulis Mutong* 3 g
Yin Chen Hao *Herba Artemisiae capillaris* 6 g
Huo Xiang *Herba Agastachis seu Pogostemi* 4.5 g
Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori graminei* 3 g
Bai Dou Kou *Fructus Amomi kravanh* 4.5 g

GE GEN QIN LIAN TANG

Pueraria-Scutellaria-Coptis Decoction

Ge Gen *Radix Puerariae* 9 g
Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 9 g
Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 4.5 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

GE XIA ZHU YU TANG

Eliminating Stasis below the Diaphragm Decoction

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 3 g
Chi Shao *Radix Paeoniae rubrae* 6 g
Hong Hua *Flos Carthami tinctorii* 9 g
Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 9 g
Wu Ling Zhi *Excrementum Troglodyti* 9 g
Yan Hu Suo *Rhizoma Corydalis yanhusuo* 3 g
Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 3 g
Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 5 g
Wu Yao *Radix Linderæ strychnifoliae* 6 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 6 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 9 g

GU TAI JIAN

Consolidating the Fetus Decoction

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 6 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 9 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g
E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 6 g
Sha Ren *Fructus Amomi* 3 g

GUI PI TANG

Tonifying the Spleen Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g (or **Dang Shen** *Radix Codonopsis pilosulae* 12 g)

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 15 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 12 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae cocos paradidicis* 9 g
Suan Zao Ren *Semen Ziziphi spinosae* 9 g
Long Yan Rou *Arillus Euphoriae longanae* 12 g
Yuan Zhi *Radix Polygalae tenuifoliae* 9 g
Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 3 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 4 g
Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 3 slices
Hong Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 5 dates

GUI SHEN WAN

Restoring the Kidneys Pill

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 6 g
Du Zhong *Cortex Eucommiae ulmoidis* 4 g
Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 6 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 4 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 6 g
Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 6 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g

GUI ZHI FU LING WAN

Ramulus Cinnamomi-Poria Pill

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 9 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g
Chi Shao *Radix Paeoniae rubrae* 9 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 9 g
Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 9 g

GUI ZHI TANG

Ramulus Cinnamomi Decoction

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 9 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g
Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 9 g
Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 12 dates
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g

GUN TAN WAN

Vapourizing Phlegm Pill (Dosages for batch of pills)

Duan Meng Shi *Lapis Micae seu Chloriti (calcined)* 30 g
Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 240 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 240 g

Chen Xiang *Lignum Aquilariae* 15 g

HAO QIN QING DAN TANG

Artemisia-Scutellaria Clearing the Gall-Bladder
Decoction

Qing Hao *Herba Artemisiae apiaceae* 4.5 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 4.5 g

Zhu Ru *Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis* 9 g

Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 4.5 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 4.5 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 4.5 g

Chi Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos rubrae* 9 g

Bi Yu San Jasper powder:

Hua Shi *Talcum* 6 parts

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 1 part

Qing Dai *Indigo pulverata levis* 1 part

HEI SHEN SAN

Black [Bean] Spirit Powder

Hei Da Dou *Semen Glycines* 6 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata*
6 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamoni cassiae* 3 g

Bao Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* (fried) 3
slices

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g

Pu Huang *Pollen Typhae* 6 g

HUA CHONG WAN

Dissolving Worms Pill (Dosages for batch of pills)

He Shi *Fructus Carpesii seu Daucusi* 1500 g

Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 1500 g

Ku Lian Gen Pi *Cortex Meliae radiceis* 1500 g

Qian Dan *Minium* 1500 g

Ming Fan *Alumen* 375 g

HUA GAN JIAN

Transforming the Liver Decoction

Qing Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae viride* 6 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g

Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radiceis* 4.5 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 4.5 g

Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 4.5 g

Chuan Bei Mu *Bulbus Fritillariae cirrhosae* 6 g

HUANG LIAN E JIAO TANG

Coptis-Colla Asini Decoction

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 12 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 6 g

E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 9 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g

Ji Zi Huang egg yolk 2 yolks

HUANG QI JIAN ZHONG TANG

Astragalus Strengthening the Centre Decoction

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 9 g

Yi Tang *Saccharum granorum* 18 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 9 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 18 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 9 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 12 dates

HUO PO XIA LING TANG

Agastache-Magnolia-Pinellia-Poria Decoction

Huo Xiang *Herba Agastachis seu Pogostemi* 6 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 3 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 4.5 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 9 g

Yi Yi Ren *Semen Coicis lachryma jobi* 12 g

Bai Dou Kou *Fructus Amomi kravanh* 1.8 g

Zhu Ling *Sclerotium Polypori umbellati* 4.5 g

Dan Dou Chi *Semen Sojae praeparatum* 9 g

Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 4.5 g

HUO XIANG ZHENG QI SAN

Agastache Upright Qi Powder

Huo Xiang *Herba Agastachis seu Pogostemi* 12 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 9 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 9 g

Zi Su Ye *Folium Perillae frutescentis* 6 g

Bai Zhi *Radix Angelicae dahuricae* 6 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g

Da Fu Pi *Pericarpium Arecae catechu* 9 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 12 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

JIAN LING TANG

Constructing Roof Tiles Decoction

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 30 g

Huai Niu Xi *Radix Achyranthis bidentatae* 30 g

Dai Zhe Shi *Haematitum* 24 g

Long Gu *Os Draconis* 18 g

Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 18 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 18 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 12 g

Bai Zi Ren *Semen Biotae orientalis* 12 g

JIE DU HUO XUE TANG

Expelling Poison Invigorating Blood Decoction

Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae suspensae* 6 g

Ge Gen *Radix Puerariae* 6 g

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 4.5 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 6 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 6 g

Chi Shao *Radix Paeoniae rubrae* 4.5 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Hong Hua *Flos Carthami tinctorii* 3 g

Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 4.5 g

Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g

JIN GUI SHEN QI WAN

Golden Chest Kidney-Qi Pill

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 3 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 24 g

Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 12 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 12 g

Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 9 g

Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radialis* 9 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

JIN LING ZI SAN

Melia Toosendan Powder

Jin Ling Zi *Fructus Meliae toosendan* 30 g

Yan Hu Suo *Rhizoma Corydalis yanhusuo* 30 g

JIN SUO GU JING WAN

Metal Lock Consolidating the Essence Pill

Sha Yuan Ji Li *Semen Astragali complanati* 6 g

Qian Shi *Semen Euryales ferocis* 6 g

Lian Xu *Stamen Nelumbinis nuciferae* 6 g

Long Gu *Os Draconis* 3 g

Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 3 g

Lian Zi *Semen Nelumbinis nuciferae* 12 g

JING FANG SI WU TANG

Schizonepeta-Ledebouriella Four Substances Decoction

Jing Jie *Herba seu Flos Schizonepetae tenuifoliae* 4.5 g

Fang Feng *Radix Ledebouriellae divaricatae* 6 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 6 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 4.5 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g

Zi Su Ye *Folium Perillae frutescentis* 3 g

JU HE WAN

Citrus Seed Pill

Ju He *Semen Citri Reticulatae* 6 g

Chuan Lian Zi *Fructus Meliae toosendan* 6 g

Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 3 g

Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 6 g

Yan Hu Suo *Rhizoma Corydalis Yanhusuo* 3 g

Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g

Mu Tong *Caulis Mutong* 3 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 3 g

Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 3 g

Hai Zao *Herba Sargassii* 6 g

Kun Bu *Thallus Algae* 6 g

Hai Dai *Zostera marina* 6 g

JU PI ZHU RU TANG

Citrus-Bambusa Decoction

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 9 g

Zhu Ru *Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis* 9 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 3 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 18 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 6 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 5 dates

LI YAN CHA

Benefiting the Throat Tea

Jin Yin Hua *Flos Lonicerae japonicae* 6 g

Ju Hua *Flos Chrysanthemi morifolii* 6 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 4.5 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g

Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 6 g

Mu Hu Die *Semen Oroxyli indicis* 4 g

Pang Da Hai *Semen Sterculiae scaphigeriae* 4.5 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

LI YIN JIAN

Regulating Yin Decoction

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

Bao Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* (fried) 3 slices

LI ZHONG AN HUI TANG

Regulating the Centre and Calming Roundworms Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 2.1 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 3 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 3 g

Chuan Jiao *Pericarpium Zanthoxyli bungeani* 0.9 g

Wu Mei *Fructus Pruni mume* 0.9 g

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 1.5 g

LI ZHONG TANG

Regulating the Centre Decoction

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 9 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

LIAN MEI AN HUI TANG

Picrorhiza-Prunus Mume Calming Roundworms Decoction

Hu Huang Lian *Rhizoma Picrorhizae* 3 g

Chuan Jiao *Pericarpium Zanthoxyli bungeani* 1.5 g

Lei Wan *Sclerotium Omphaliae lapidescens* 9 g

Wu Mei *Fructus Pruni mume* 2 prunes

Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 2.4 g

Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 2 nuts

LIAN PO YIN

Coptis-Magnolia Decoction

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 3 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 6 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 9 g

Dan Dou Chi *Semen Sojae praeparatum* 9 g

Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori graminei* 3 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 3 g

Lu Gen *Rhizoma Phragmitis communis* 15 g

LIANG DI TANG

Two 'Di' Decoction

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 18 g

Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii chinensis radices* 9 g

Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 12 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 9 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 12 g

E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 9 g

LIANG FU WAN

Alpinia-Cyperus Pill

Gao Liang Jiang *Rhizoma Alpiniae officinari* 6 g

Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 6 g

LIANG GE SAN

Cooling the Diaphragm Powder

Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 600 g

Mang Xiao *Mirabilitum* 600 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 600 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae* 300 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 300 g

Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae suspensae* 1200 g

Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 300 g

LIANG SHOU TANG

Two Receiving Decoction

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 9 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 6 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 6 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 4.5 g
Qian Shi *Semen Euryales ferocis* 6 g
Bian Dou *Semen Dolichoris lablab* 6 g
Ba Ji Tian *Radix Morindae officinalis* 6 g
Du Zhong *Cortex Eucommiae ulmoidis* 6 g
Bai Guo *Semen Ginkgo bilobae* 6 g

LING GAN WU WEI JIANG XIN TANG

Poria-Glycyrrhiza-Schisandra-Zingiber-Asarum Decoction

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 12 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 9 g
Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 9 g
Xi Xin *Herba Asari cum radice* 9 g
Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 6 g

LING GUI ZHU GAN TANG

Poria-Ramulus Cinnamomi-Atractylodes-Glycyrrhiza Decoction

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 12 g
Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 9 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

LING JIAO GOU TENG TANG

Cornu Antelopis-Uncaria Decoction

Ling Yang Jiao *Cornu Antelopis* 4.5 g
Gou Teng *Ramulus Uncariae* 9 g
Sang Ye *Folium Mori albae* 6 g
Ju Hua *Flos Chrysanthemi morifolii* 9 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 15 g
Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae cocos paradidicis* 9 g
Chuan Bei Mu *Bulbus Fritillariae cirrhosae* 12 g
Zhu Ru *Caulis Bambusae in Taenis* 15 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 2.5 g

LIU JUN ZI TANG

Six Gentlemen Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 3 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 4.5 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 3 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 4.5 g

LIU WEI DI HUANG WAN

Six-Ingredient Rehmannia Pill

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 24 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 12 g
Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 12 g
Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 9 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 9 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

LONG CHI QING HUN TANG

Dens Draconis Clearing the Ethereal Soul Decoction

Long Chi *Dens Draconis* 9 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 4.5 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Yuan Zhi *Radix Polygalae tenuifoliae* 4.5 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 9 g
Gui Xin *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g
Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae cocos paradidicis* 6 g
Xi Xin *Herba cum Radice Asari* 1.5 g

LONG DAN BI YUAN FANG

Gentiana 'Nose Pool' Formula

Long Dan Cao *Radix Gentianae scabrae* 6 g
Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 6 g
Xia Ku Cao *Spica Prunellae vulgaris* 6 g
Yu Xing Cao *Herba cum Radice Houttuyniae cordatae* 6 g
Ju Hua *Flos Chrysanthemi morifolii* 6 g
Bai Zhi *Radix Angelicae dahuricae* 6 g
Cang Er Zi *Fructus Xanthii sibirici* 6 g
Huo Xiang *Herba Agastachis seu Pogostemi* 4.5 g
Yi Yi Ren *Semen Coicis lachryma jobi* 12 g
Che Qian Zi *Semen Plantaginis* 6 g
Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 3 g

LONG DAN XIE GAN TANG

Gentiana Draining the Liver Decoction

Long Dan Cao *Radix Gentianae scabrae* 6 g
Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 9 g
Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 9 g
Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 9 g
Mu Tong *Caulis Mutong* 9 g
Che Qian Zi *Semen Plantaginis* 9 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 12 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 9 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

LU JIAO TU SI ZI WAN

Cornus Cervi-Cuscuta Pill
Lu Jiao Shuang *Cornu Cervi degelatinatum* 9 g
Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 9 g
Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 12 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g
Du Zhong *Cortex Eucommiae ulmoidis* 6 g
Lian Xu *Semen Nelumbinis nuciferae* 6 g
Bai Guo *Semen Ginkgo bilobae* 6 g
Qian Shi *Semen Euryales ferocis* 6 g

MA HUANG TANG

Ephedra Decoction
Ma Huang *Herba Ephedrae* 9 g
Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 6 g
Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 9 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

MA XING SHI GAN TANG

Ephedra-Prunus-Gypsum-Glycyrrhiza Decoction
Ma Huang *Herba Ephedrae* 12 g
Shi Gao *Gypsum fibrosum* 48 g
Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 18 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g

MA ZI REN WAN

Cannabis Pill
Huo Ma Ren *Semen Cannabis sativae* 9 g
Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 6 g
Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 4.5 g
Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 6 g
Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 4.5 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 4.5 g

MAI MEN DONG TANG

Ophiopogon Decoction
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 60 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 4 g

Geng Mi *Semen Oryzae sativae* 6 g
Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 3 dates

MU XIANG LIU QI YIN

Aucklandia Flowing Qi Decoction
Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 6 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 6 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g
Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 4.5 g
Qing Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae viride* 3 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g
Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 6 g
Zi Su Ye *Folium Perillae frutescentis* 3 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g
Mu Gua *Fructus Chaenomelis lagenariae* 3 g
Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori graminei* 3 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 4.5 g
Bai Zhi *Radix Angelicae dahuricae* 3 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g
Cao Guo *Fructus Amomi tsaoko* 3 g
Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 1.5 g
E Zhu *Rhizoma Curcumae zedoariae* 3 g
Da Fu Pi *Pericarpium Arecae catechu* 3 g
Ding Xiang *Flos Caryophylli* 3 g
Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 3 g
Huo Xiang *Herba Agastachis seu Pogostemi* 3 g
Mu Tong *Caulis Mutong* 1.5 g

NEI BU WAN

Inner Tonification Pill
Lu Rong *Cornu Cervi parvum* 3 g
Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 6 g
Rou Cong Rong *Herba Cistanchis deserticola* 6 g
Sha Yuan Zi *Semen Astragali complanati* 6 g
Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 6 g
Sang Piao Xiao *Ootheca Mantidis* 6 g
Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 2 g
Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 2 g
Bai Ji Li *Fructus Tribuli terrestris* 3 g
Zi Wan *Radix Asteris tatarici* 3 g

NUAN GAN JIAN

Warming the Liver Decoction
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 9 g

Xiao Hui Xiang *Fructus Foeniculi vulgaris* 6 g
Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g
Wu Yao *Radix Linderae strychnifoliae* 6 g
Chen Xiang *Lignum Aquilariae* 3 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g
Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens*
 3 slices

PING WEI SAN

Balancing the Stomach Powder

Cang Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis lanceae* 12 g
Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 9 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 9 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata*
 3 g

QI JU DI HUANG WAN

Lycium-Chrysanthemum-Rehmannia Pill

Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 6 g
Ju Hua *Flos Chrysanthemi morifolii* 6 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata*
 24 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 12 g
Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 12 g
Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 9 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 9 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

QING E WAN

Young Maiden Pill (Dosages for batch of pills)

(Jiang Zhi Chao) Du Zhong *Cortex Eucommiae ulmoidis* (fried in ginger-juice) 480 g
(Jiu Chao) Bu Gu Zhi *Fructus et Semen Psoraleae corydoliae* (fried in wine) 240 g
Hu Tao Rou *Semen Juglandis regia* 20 g

QING GAN TOU DING TANG

Clearing the Liver Penetrating the Vertex Decoction

Ling Yang Jiao *Cornu Antelopis* 6 g
Shi Jue Ming *Concha Haliotidis* 9 g
Chan Tui *Periostracum Cicadae* 6 g
Sang Ye *Folium Mori albae* 4.5 g
Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 3 g
Xia Ku Cao *Spica Prunellae vulgaris* 6 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 6 g

Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 6 g
Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 3 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 4.5 g

QING GU SAN

Clearing the Bones Powder

Yin Chai Hu *Radix Stellariae dichotomae* 4.5 g
Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis* 3 g
Hu Huang Lian *Rhizoma Picrorhizae* 3 g
Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii radidis* 3 g
Qing Hao *Herba Artemisiae apiaceae* 3 g
Qin Jiao *Radix Gentianae macrophyllae* 3 g
Bie Jia *Carapax Amydae sinensis* 3 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 1.5 g

QING HAI WAN

Clearing the Sea Pill

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata*
 9 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g
Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 6 g
Sang Ye *Folium Mori albae* 3 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 6 g
Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 6 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 6 g
Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii radidis* 6 g
Bei Sha Shen *Radix Glehniae* 6 g
Shi Hu *Herba Dendrobii* 6 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g
Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 4.5 g
Long Gu *Os Draconis* 9 g

QING HAO BIE JIA TANG

Artemisia Annua-Carapax Amydae Decoction

Bie Jia *Carapax Amydae sinensis* 15 g
Qing Hao *Herba Artemisiae apiaceae* 6 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 12 g
Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis* 6 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 9 g

QING JING SAN

Clearing the Menses Powder

Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 6 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 6 g
Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii radices* 15 g
Qing Hao *Herba Artemisiae apiaceae* 6 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 3 g
Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 1.5 g

QING LUO YIN

Clearing the Connecting Channels Decoction

Xian Jin Yin Hua *Flos Lonicerae japonicae recens* 6 g
Xian Bian Dou Hua *Flos Dolichoris lablab recens* 6 g
Xi Gua Shuang *Mirabilitum Praeparata citrulli* 6 g
Si Gua Pi *Pericarpium Luffae acutangulae* 6 g
Xian He Ye *Folium Nelumbinis nuciferae recens* 6 g
Xian Zhu Ye *Herba Lophateri gracilis recens* 6 g

QING QI HUA TAN TANG

Clearing Qi and Resolving Phlegm Decoction

Dan Nan Xing *Pulvis Arisaemae cum felle bovis* 6 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 6 g
Gua Lou Ren *Semen Trichosanthis* 6 g
Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 4.5 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g
Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 4.5 g
Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 4.5 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g

QING RE AN TAI YIN

Clearing Heat and Calming the Fetus Decoction

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 3 g
Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 6 g
Ce Bai Ye *Cacumen Biotae orientalis* 3 g
Chun Gen Bai Pi *Cortex Ailanthi altissimae* 6 g
E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii Asini* 6 g
Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 6 g

QING RE GU JING TANG

Clearing Heat and Consolidating the Menses Decoction

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 4.5 g
Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* (charred) 6 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 9 g
Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii radices* 6 g
Di Yu *Radix Sanguisorbae officinalis* 6 g
E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 6 g
Ou Jie *Nodus Nelumbinis nuciferae rhizomatis* 6 g

Zong Lu Zi *Fructus Trachycarpi fortunei* 4.5 g
Gui Ban *Plastrum Testudinis* (toasted) 12 g
Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 12 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

QING RE TIAO XUE TANG

Clearing Heat and Regulating Blood Decoction

Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radices* 6 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 9 g
Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 4.5 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 6 g
Hong Hua *Flos Carthami tinctorii* 6 g
Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 6 g
E Zhu *Rhizoma Curcumae zedoariae* 6 g
Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 6 g
Yan Hu Suo *Rhizoma Corydalis yanhusuo* 6 g

QING WEI SAN

Clearing the Stomach Powder

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 1.8 g
Sheng Ma *Rhizoma Cimicifugae* 3 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radices* 1.5 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 0.9 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 0.9 g

QING YING TANG

Clearing Nutritive-Qi Decoction

Shui Niu Jiao *Cornu Bufali* 18 g
Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 9 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 15 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 9 g
Jin Yin Hua *Flos Lonicerae japonicae* 9 g
Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae suspensae* 6 g
Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 4.5 g
Zhu Ye *Herba Lophatheri gracilis* 3 g
Dan Shen *Radix Salviae miltiorrhizae* 6 g

QING ZAO JIU FEI TANG

Clearing Dryness and Rescuing the Lungs Decoction

Sang Ye *Folium Mori albae* 9 g
Shi Gao *Gypsum fibrosum* 7.5 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 3.6 g
E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 2.4 g

Hei Zhi Ma *Semen Sesami indicis* 3 g
Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 2.1 g
Pi Pa Ye *Folium Eriobotryae japonicae* 3 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 2.1 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

QING ZAO RUN CHANG TANG

Clearing Dryness and Moistening the Intestines
 Decoction

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 9 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmannia glutinosae praeparata*
 6 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Huo Ma Ren *Semen Cannabis sativae* 4.5 g
Gua Lou Ren *Semen Trichosanthis* 6 g
Yu Li Ren *Semen Pruni* 6 g
Shi Hu *Herba Dendrobi* 9 g
Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 3 g
Qing Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae viride* 3 g
Jin Ju *Fructus Fortunaellae margaritae* 4.5 g

QU TIAO TANG

Expelling Tapeworms Decoction

Nan Guan Zi *Semen Cucurbitae moschatae* 60 g
Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 30 g

REN SHEN BU FEI TANG

Ginseng Tonifying the Lungs Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g
Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 24 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata*
 24 g
Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 6 g
Zi Wan *Radix Asteris tatarici* 6 g
Sang Bai Pi *Cortex Mori albae radices* 6 g

ROU FU BAO YUAN TANG

Cinnamomum-Aconitum Preserving the Source
 Decoction

Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 1.5 g
Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 3 g
Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 6 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata*
 3 g

SAN JIA FU MAI TANG

Three Carapaces Restoring the Pulse Decoction

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata*
 18 g
Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 18 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 18 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 15 g
Huo Ma Ren *Semen Cannabis sativae* 9 g
E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 9 g
Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 15 g
Bie Jia *Carapax Amydae sinensis* 24 g
Gui Ban *Plastrum Testudinis* 30 g

SAN MIAO HONG TENG TANG

Three Wonderful Sargentodoxa Decoction

Cang Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis* 6 g
Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 6 g
Yi Yi Ren *Semen Coicis lachryma-jobi* 10 g
Hong Teng *Caulis Sargentodoxae cuneatae* 6 g
Xiao Ji *Herba Cephalanoplos* 6 g
Da Ji *Herba seu Radix Cirsii japonici* 6 g
Xian He Cao *Herba Agrimoniae pilosulae* 6 g
Yi Mu Cao *Herba Leonuri heterophylli* 6 g
Xia Ku Cao *Spica Prunellae vulgaris* 6 g
Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 6 g
Bai Jiang Cao *Herba cum Radice Patriniae* 6 g

SAN REN TANG

Three Seeds Decoction

Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 15 g
Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 6 g
Hua Shi *Talcum* 18 g
Tong Cao *Medulla Tetrapanacis papyriferi* 6 g
Bai Dou Kou *Fructus Amomi kravanh* 6 g
Zhu Ye *Herba Lophatheri gracilis* 6 g
Yi Yi Ren *Semen Coicis lachryma-jobi* 18 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g

SAN ZI YANG QIN TANG

Three-Seed Nourishing the Ancestors Decoction

Bai Jie Zi *Semen Sinapis albae* 6 g
Su Zi *Fructus Perillae frutescentis* 6 g
Lai Fu Zi *Semen Raphani sativi* 6 g

SANG JU YIN

Morus-Chrysanthemum Decoction

Sang Ye *Folium Mori albae* 7.5 g

Ju Hua *Flos Chrysanthemi morifolii* 3 g

Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae suspensae* 4.5 g

Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 2.4 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 6 g

Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 6 g

Lu Gen *Rhizoma Phragmitis communis* 6 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

SANG PIAO XIAO SAN

Ootheca Mantidis Powder

Sang Piao Xiao *Ootheca Mantidis* 9 g

Long Gu *Os Draconis* 12 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae cocos paradisis* 9 g

Yuan Zhi *Radix Polygalae tenuifoliae* 3 g

Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori graminei* 3 g

Zhi Gui Ban *Plastrum Testudinis* (honey-fried) 9 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

SANG XING TANG

Morus-Prunus Decoction

Sang Ye *Folium Mori albae* 3 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 3 g

Dan Dou Chi *Semen Sojae praeparatum* 3 g

Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 4.5 g

Zhe Bei Mu *Bulbus Fritillariae thunbergii* 3 g

Nan Sha Shen *Radix Adenophorae* 6 g

Li Pi *Fructus Pyri* 3 g

SHA SHEN MAI DONG TANG

Glehnia-Ophiopogon Decoction

Sha Shen *Radix Adenophorae seu Glehniae* 9 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 9 g

Yu Zhu *Rhizoma Polygonati odorati* 6 g

Sang Ye *Folium Mori albae* 4.5 g

Tian Hua Fen *Radix Trichosanthis kirilowii* 4.5 g

Bian Dou *Semen Dolichoris lablab* 4.5 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

SHAO FU ZHU YU TANG

Lower Abdomen Eliminating Stasis Decoction

Xiao Hui Xiang *Fructus Foeniculi vulgaris* 6 g

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 2 g

Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 1.5 g

Yan Hu Suo *Rhizoma Corydalis yanhusuo* 6 g

Mo Yao *Myrrha* 6 g

Pu Huang *Pollen Typhae* 6 g

Wu Ling Zhi *Excrementum Troglodyteri* 4.5 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 4.5 g

Chi Shao Yao *Radix Paeoniae rubrae* 6 g

SHAO YAO TANG

Paeonia Decoction

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 30 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 15 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 6 g

Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 6 g

Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 6 g

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 15 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 15 g

Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 9 g

Guan Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi loureiroi* 7.5 g

SHE GAN MA HUANG TANG

Belamcanda-Ephedra Decoction

She Gan *Rhizoma Belamcandae chinensis* 9 g

Ma Huang *Herba Ephedrae* 12 g

Zi Wan *Radix Asteris tatarici* 9 g

Kuan Dong Hua *Flos Tussilaginis farfarae* 9 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g

Xi Xin *Herba cum Radice Asari* 9 g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 3 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens*

12 g

Da Zao *Fructus Zizyphi jujubae* 3 pieces

SHEN FU TANG

Ginseng-Aconitum Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 30 g

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata*

15 g

SHEN GE SAN

Ginseng-Gecko Powder

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 12 g

Ge Jie *Gecko* 12 g

SHEN LING BAI ZHU SAN

Ginseng-Poria-Atractylodes Powder

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 10 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 10 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 10 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 10 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 10 g

Bian Dou *Semen Dolichoris lablab* 7.5 g

Lian Zi *Semen Nelumbinis nuciferae* 5 g

Yi Yi Ren *Semen Coicis lachryma jobi* 5 g

Sha Ren *Fructus seu Semen Amomi* 5 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 5 g

SHEN QI SI WU TANG

Ginseng-Astragalus Four Substances Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 9 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

Shu Du Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 6 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 6 g

SHENG HUA TANG

Generating and Resolving Decoction

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 24 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 9 g

Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 6 g

Pao Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* (fried) 1.5 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 1.5 g

SHENG MAI SAN

Generating the Pulse Powder

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 1.5 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 1.5 g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 7 seeds

SHENG YANG TANG

Raising the Yang Decoction

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g

Ma Huang *Herba Ephedrae* 12 g

Fang Feng *Radix Ledebouriellae divaricatae* 12 g

Qiang Huo *Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii* 18 g

SHENG YU TANG

Sage Healing Decoction

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 9 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 9 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 1.5 g

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali membranacei* 1.5 g

SHI PI YIN

Bolster the Spleen Decoction

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 6 g

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 6 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g

Mu Gua *Fructus Chaenomelis lagenariae* 6 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 6 g

Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 6 g

Da Fu Pi *Pericarpium Arecae catechu* 6 g

Cao Guo *Fructus Amomi tsaoko* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 3 dates

SHI XIAO SAN

Breaking into a Smile Powder

Pu Huang *Pollen Typhae* 6 g

Wu Ling Zhi *Excrementum Troglodyteri* 6 g

SHOU TAI WAN

Fetus Longevity Pill

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 6 g

Sang Ji Sheng *Ramulus Sangjisheng* 6 g

Xu Duan *Radix Dipsaci asperi* 6 g

E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 6 g

SI HAI SHU YU WAN

Four Seas Soothe Stagnation Pill

Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 6 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g

Kun Bu *Thallus Algae* 6 g

Hai Dai *Zostera marina* 6 g
Hai Zao *Herba Sargassii* 6 g
Hai Piao Xiao *Os Sepiae* 6 g
Hai Ge Ke *Concha Cyclinae sinensis* 6 g

SI JUN ZI TANG

Four Gentlemen Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 9 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

SI MO TANG

Four Milled-Herb Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 3 g
Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 9 g
Chen Xiang *Lignum Aquilariae* 3 g
Wu Yao *Radix Linderae strychnifoliae* 9 g

SI NI TANG

Four Rebellious Decoction

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 6 g
Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 4.5 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g

SI WU MA ZI REN WAN

Four Substances Cannabis Pill

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 3 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 6 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g
Huo Ma Ren *Semen Cannabis sativae* 9 g
Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 6 g
Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 4.5 g
Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 6 g
Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 4.5 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 4.5 g

SI WU TANG

Four Substances Decoction

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 3 g

SU HE XIANG WAN

Styrax Pill (Dosages for batch of pills)

Su He Xiang *Styrax liquidis* 30 g
She Xiang *Secretio Moschus* 60 g
Bing Pian *Borneol* 30 g
An Xi Xiang *Benzoinum* 60 g
Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 60 g
Tan Xiang *Lignum Santali albi* 60 g
Chen Xiang *Lignum Aquilariae* 60 g
Ru Xiang *Gummi Olibanum* 30 g
Ding Xiang *Flos Caryophylli* 60 g
Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 60 g
Bi Ba *Fructus Piperis longi* 60 g
Xi Jiao *Cornu Rhinoceri* 60 g
Zhu Sha *Cinnabaris* 60 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 60 g
He Zi *Fructus Terminaliae chebulae* 60 g
Note: She Xiang, Xi Jiao and Zhu Sha are banned substances. She Xiang can be replaced by Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori graminei* and Xi Jiao by Shui Niu Jiao *Cornu Bubali*.

SU ZI JIANG QI TANG

Perilla-Seed Subduing Qi Decoction

Su Zi *Fructus Perillae frutescentis* 9 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g
Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 6 g
Qian Hu *Radix Peucedani* 6 g
Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 2 slices
Su Ye *Folium Perillae* 5 leaves
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g
Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 1 date

SUO GONG ZHU YU TANG

Contracting the Uterus and Eliminating Stasis Decoction

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 6 g
Pu Huang *Pollen Typhae* 6 g
Wu Ling Zhi *Excrementum Troglodyteri seu Pteromi* 6 g
Dang Shen *Radix Codonopsis pilosulae* 6 g

Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 4.5 g
Yi Mu Cao *Herba Leonuri heterophylli* 6 g

SUO QUAN WAN

Contracting the Spring Pill

Wu Yao *Radix Linderae strychnifoliae* 9 g
Yi Zhi Ren *Fructus Alpiniae oxyphyllae* 9 g

TAO HE CHENG QI TANG

Prunus Conducting Qi Decoction

Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 50 pieces
Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 12 g
Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 6 g
Mang Xiao *Mirabilitum* 6 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g

TAO HONG SI WU TANG

Persica-Carthamus Four Substances Decoction

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 12 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 10 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 12 g
Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 8 g
Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 6 g
Hong Hua *Flos Carthami tinctorii* 4 g

TIAN DI JIAN

Heaven and Earth Decoction

Tian Men Dong *Tuber Asparagus cochinchinensis* 9 g
Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

TIAN MA GOU TENG YIN

Gastrodia-Uncaria Decoction

Tian Ma *Rhizoma Gastrodiae elatae* 9 g
Gou Teng *Ramulus Uncariae* 9 g
Shi Jue Ming *Concha Haliotidis* 6 g
Sang Ji Sheng *Ramulus Loranthe* 9 g
Du Zhong *Radix Eucommiae ulmoidis* 9 g
Chuan Niu Xi *Radix Cyathulae* 9 g
Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoides* 6 g
Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 9 g
Yi Mu Cao *Herba Leonori heterophylli* 9 g

Ye Jiao Teng *Caulis Polygoni multiflori* 9 g
Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae cocos paradidicis* 6 g

TIAN TAI WU YAO SAN

Top-Quality Lindera Powder

Wu Yao *Radix Linderae strychnifoliae* 15 g
Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 15 g
Xiao Hui Xiang *Fructus Foeniculi vulgaris* 15 g
Qing Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae viride* 15 g
Gao Liang Jiang *Rhizoma Alpiniae officinari* 15 g
Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 2 pieces
Jin Ling Zi *Fructus Meliae toosendan* 10 pieces

TIAN WANG BU XIN DAN

Heavenly Emperor Tonifying the Heart Pill

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 12 g
Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 6 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g
Tian Men Dong *Tuber Asparagi cochinchinensis* 6 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g
Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 6 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Dan Shen *Radix Salviae miltiorrhizae* 6 g
Bai Zi Ren *Semen Biotae orientalis* 6 g
Suan Zao Ren *Semen Ziziphi spinosae* 6 g
Yuan Zhi *Radix Polygalae tenuifoliae* 6 g
Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 3 g

TIAO WEI CHENG QI TANG

Regulating the Stomach Conducting Qi Decoction

Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 12 g
Mang Xiao *Mirabilitum* 9 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g

TIAO ZHENG SAN

Regulating the Upright Powder

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g
Cang Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis* 6 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g
Zhe Bei Mu *Bulbus Fritillariae Thunbergii* 6 g
Yi Yi Ren *Semen Coicis lachryma-jobi* 12 g

TONG YOU TANG

Penetrating the Depth Decoction

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 1.5 g

Hong Hua *Flos Carthami tinctorii* 1.5 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 3 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmannia glutinosae praeparata* 3 g

Sheng Ma *Rhizoma Cimicifugae* 6 g

Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 6 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Bing Lang *Semen Arecae catechu* 3 g

TU SI ZI WAN

Cuscuta Pill

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 6 g

Lu Rong *Cornu Cervi parvum* 3 g

Rou Cong Rong *Herba Cistanches deserticola* 6 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 3 g

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 3 g

Wu Yao *Radix Linderae strychnifoliae* 3 g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 3 g

Sang Piao Xiao *Ootheca Mantidis* 3 g

Yi Zhi Ren *Fructus Alpiniae oxyphyllae* 3 g

Duan Mu Li *Concha Ostreae (calcined)* 6 g

Ji Nei Jin *Endothelium cornei Gigeriae galli* 1.5 g

WEI LING SAN

Stomach Poria Powder

Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 4 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 2.3 g

Zhu Ling *Sclerotium Polypori umbellati* 2.3 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 2.3 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 1.5 g

Cang Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis lanceae* 12 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 9 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

WEI LING TANG

Stomach 'Ling' Decoction

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g

Cang Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis* 6 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 6 g

Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 6 g

Zhu Ling *Sclerotium Polypori umbellati* 6 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnolia officinalis* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 3 pieces

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 3 slices

WEN DAN TANG

Warming the Gall Bladder Decoction

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 6 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 5 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 9 g

Zhu Ru *Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis* 6 g

Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 5 slices

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 1 date

WEN PI TANG

Warming the Spleen Decoction

Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 12 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 6 g

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 6 g

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 9 g

WEN YANG BU GAN JIAN

Warming Yang and Tonifying the Liver Decoction

Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g

Yin Yang Huo *Herba Epimedii* 6 g

Zi Shi Ying *Fluoriturum* 6 g

She Chuang Zi *Fructus Cnidii monnieri* 4.5 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

Mu Gua *Fructus Chaenomelis* 6 g

WU HU TANG

Five Tigers Decoction

Ma Huang *Herba Ephedrae* 2.1 g

Shi Gao *Gypsum fibrosum* 4.5 g

Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniacae* 3 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 1.2 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 3 slices

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 1 date

Xi Cha Fine green tea 2.4 g

WU LING SAN

Five-Ingredient Poria Powder

Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 4 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 2.3 g

Zhu Ling *Sclerotium Polypori umbellati* 2.3 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 2.3 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 1.5 g

WU MEI WAN

Prunus Mume Pill

Wu Mei *Fructus Pruni mume* 24 g

Chuan Jiao *Pericarpium Zanthoxyli bungeani* 1.5 g

Xi Xin *Herba Asari cum radice* 1.5 g

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 9 g

Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 6 g

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 6 g

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata*
3 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 3 g

WU REN WAN

Five-Seed Pill

Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 9 g

Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 9 g

Bai Zi Ren *Semen Biotae orientalis* 6 g

Song Zi Ren *Semen Pini tabulaeformis* 3 g

Yu Li Ren *Semen Pruni* 3 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 9 g

WU YAO SAN

Lindera Powder

Wu Yao *Radix Linderae strychnifoliae* 6 g

Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 6 g

Su Zi *Fructus Perillae frutescentis* 4.5 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 3 g

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 6 g

Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 6 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g

Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 3 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 3 g

Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 3 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

WU ZHU YU TANG

Evodia Decoction

Wu Zhu Yu *Fructus Evodiae rutaecarpae* 9 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 6 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 3 dates

WU ZI YAN ZONG WAN

Five-Seed Developing Ancestors Pill

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 240 g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 30 g

Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 240 g

Fu Pen Zi *Fructus Rubi chingii* 120 g

Che Qian Zi *Semen Plantaginis* 60 g

XI JIAO DI HUANG TANG

Cornus Rhinoceri-Rehmannia Decoction

Shui Niu Jiao *Cornu Bufali* 6 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 24 g

Chi Shao *Radix Paeoniae rubrae* 9 g

Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 6 g

XIANG LENG WAN

Aucklandia-Sparganium Pill

Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 6 g

Ding Xiang *Flos Caryophylli* 3 g

San Leng *Rhizoma Sparganii stoloniferi* 6 g

Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 6 g

Qing Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae viride* 3 g

Chuan Lian Zi *Fructus Meliae toosendan* 3 g

Xiao Hui Xiang *Fructus Foeniculi vulgaris* 6 g

E Zhu *Rhizoma Curcumae ezhu* 6 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens*
3 slices

XIAO CHAI HU TANG

Small Bupleurum Decoction

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 24 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 9 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 24 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 9 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 9 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 12 pieces

XIAO JIAN ZHONG TANG

Small Strengthening the Centre Decoction

Yi Tang *Saccharum granorum* 18 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 9 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 18 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 6 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 9 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 12 dates

XIAO QING LONG TANG

Small Green Dragon Decoction

Ma Huang *Herba Ephedrae* 9 g

Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 9 g

Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 9 g

Xi Xin *Herba Asari cum radice* 3 g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae chinensis* 6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata*
3 g

XIAO YAO SAN

Free and Easy Wanderer Powder

Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 3 g

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 9 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 12 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 9 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 15 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 6 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens*
3 slices

XIE BAI SAN

Draining the White Powder

Sang Bai Pi *Cortex Mori albae radicis* 30 g

Di Gu Pi *Cortex Lycii radicis* 30 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

Geng Mi Non-glutinous rice 15 g

XIE HUANG SAN

Draining Yellowness Powder

Shi Gao *Gypsum fibrosum* 15 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 6 g

Fang Feng *Radix Ledebouriellae divaricatae* 12 g

Huo Xiang *Herba Agastachis seu Pogostemi* 12 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

XIE XIN TANG

Draining the Heart Decoction

Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 6 g

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 3 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 3 g

XIN YI QING FEI YIN

Magnolia Decoction to Clear the Lung

Xin Yi Hua *Flos Magnoliae liliflorae* 6 g

Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 6 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 4.5 g

Shi Gao *Gypsum fibrosum* 15 g

Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis* 6 g

Jin Yin Hua *Flos Lonicerae japonicae* 6 g

Yu Xing Cao *Herba cum Radice Houltuyniae cordatae*
6 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g

XING SU SAN

Prunus-Perilla Powder

Zi Su Ye *Folium Perillae frutescentis* 6 g

Qian Hu *Radix Peucedani* 6 g

Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 6 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 6 g

Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 6 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 6 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 6 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 6 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 2 dates

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

XUAN FU DAI ZHE TANG

Inula-Hematite Decoction

Xuan Fu Hua *Flos Inulae* 9 g

Dai Zhe Shi *Haematitum* 3 g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g

Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 6 g

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 12 dates

XUE FU ZHU YU TANG

Blood Mansion Eliminating Stasis Decoction

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 9 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 9 g

Chi Shao *Radix Paeoniae rubrae* 6 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 5 g

Tao Ren *Semen Persicae* 12 g

Hong Hua *Flos Carthami tinctorii* 9 g

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 3 g

Zhi Ke *Fructus Citri aurantii* 6 g

Niu Xi *Radix Achyranthis bidentatae* seu *Cyathulae* 9 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 5 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

YAN HU SUO TANG

Corydalis Decoction

Yan Hu Suo *Rhizoma Corydalis yanhusuo* 45 g

Pu Huang *Pollen Typhae* 15 g

Chi Shao *Radix Paeoniae rubrae* 15 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 15 g

Guan Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi loureiroi* 15 g

Jiang Huang *Rhizoma Curcumae longae* 90 g

Ru Xiang *Gummi Olibanum* 90 g

Mo Yao *Myrrha* 90 g

Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 90 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 7.5 g

YANG YIN QING FEI TANG

Nourishing Yin and Clearing the Lungs Decoction

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 6 g

Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 4.5 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 3.6 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 2.4 g

Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radialis* 2.4 g

Zhe Bei Mu *Bulbus Fritillariae thunbergii* 2.4 g

Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 1.5 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 1.5 g

YI GAN SAN

Restraining the Liver Powder

Bai Zhu (fried) *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 3 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 3 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 3 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 2.4 g

Gou Teng *Ramulus Uncariae* 3 g

Chai Hu *Radix Bupleuri* 1.5 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 1.5 g

YI GUAN JIAN

One Linking Decoction

Bei Sha Shen *Radix Glehniae littoralis* 10 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 10 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 10 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 30 g

Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 12 g

Chuan Lian Zi *Fructus Meliae toosendan* 5 g

YI JIA ZHENG QI SAN

First Variation Upright Qi Powder

Huo Xiang *Herba Agastachis seu Pogostemi* 6 g

Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 6 g

Xing Ren *Semen Pruni armeniaca* 6 g

Fu Ling Pi *Cortex Poriae cocos* 6 g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 6 g

Shen Qu *Massa Fermentata medicinalis* 4.5 g

Mai Ya *Fructus Hordei vulgaris germinatus* 4.5 g

Yin Chen Hao *Herba Artemisiae capillaris* 6 g

Da Fu Pi *Pericarpium Arecae catechu* 3 g

YI WEI TANG

Benefiting the Stomach Decoction

Sha Shen *Radix Adenophorae seu Glehniae* 9 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 15 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 15 g

Yu Zhu *Rhizoma Polygonati odorati* 4.5 g

Bing Tang *Rock candy* 3 g

YI YIN JIAN

One Yin Decoction

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 6 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 6 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

Huai Niu Xi *Radix Achyranthis bidentatae* 4.5 g

Dan Shen *Radix Salviae miltiorrhizae* 6 g

YIN CHEN HAO TANG

Artemisia Yinchenhao Decoction

Yin Chen Hao *Herba Artemisiae capillaris* 6 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 9 g

Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 6 g

YIN JIA WAN

Lonicera-Amyda Pill

Jin Yin Hua *Flos Lonicerae japonicae* 6 g

Bie Jia *Carapacis Amydae sinensis* 9 g

Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae suspensae* 6 g

Sheng Ma *Rhizoma Cimicifugae* 6 g

Hong Teng *Caulis Sargentodoxae cuneatae* 6 g

Pu Gong Ying *Herba Taraxaci mongolici cum Radice* 6 g

Da Qing Ye *Folium Daqingye* 6 g

Yin Chen Hao *Herba Artemisiae yinchenhao* 4.5 g

Hu Po *Succinum* 6 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 3 g

Zi Hua Di Ding *Herba cum Radice Violae yedoensis* 6 g

Pu Huang *Pollen Typhae* 6 g

Chun Gen Bai Pi *Cortex Ailanthi altissimae* 6 g

YIN QIAO SAN

Lonicera-Forsythia Powder

Jin Yin Hua *Flos Lonicerae japonicae* 9 g

Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae suspensae* 9 g

Jie Geng *Radix Platycodi grandiflori* 3 g

Niu Bang Zi *Fructus Arctii lappae* 9 g

Bo He *Herba Menthae haplocalycis* 3 g

Dan Dou Chi *Semen Sojae praeparatum* 3 g

Jing Jie *Herba seu Flos Schizonepetae tenuifoliae* 6 g

Zhu Ye *Herba Lophatheri gracilis* 3 g

Lu Gen *Rhizoma Phragmitis communis* 15 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g

YOU GUI WAN

Restoring the Right [Kidney] Pill

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 3 g

Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g

Du Zhong *Cortex Eucommiae ulmoidis* 6 g

Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 4.5 g

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae chinensis* 6 g

Lu Jiao Jiao *Colla Corni Cervi* 6 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 12 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 6 g

Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 6 g

Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 4.5

YU NU JIAN

Jade Woman Decoction

Shi Gao *Gypsum fibrosum* 15 g

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata* 9 g

Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis* 3 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 6 g

Huai Niu Xi *Radix Achyranthis bidentatae* 3 g

YUE JU WAN

Gardenia-Ligusticum Pill

Cang Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis lanceae* 6 g

Chuan Xiong *Radix Ligustici chuanxiong* 6 g

Xiang Fu *Rhizoma Cyperi rotundi* 6 g

Shan Zhi Zi *Fructus Gardeniae jasminoidis* 6 g

Shen Qu *Massa Fermentata medicinalis* 6 g

ZENG YE TANG

Increasing Fluids Decoction

Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 18 g

Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 12 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 12 g

ZHEN GAN XI FENG TANG

Pacifying the Liver and Extinguishing Wind Decoction

Huai Niu Xi *Radix Achyranthis bidentatae* 15 g

Dai Zhe Shi *Haematitum* 15 g

Long Gu *Os Draconis* 12 g

Mu Li *Concha Ostreae* 12 g

Gui Ban *Plastrum Testudinis* 12 g

Xuan Shen *Radix Scrophulariae ningpoensis* 12 g

Tian Men Dong *Tuber Asparagi cochinchinensis* 12 g

Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 12 g

Yin Chen Hao *Herba Artemisiae capillaris* 6 g

Chuan Lian Zi *Fructus Meliae toosendan* 6 g

Mai Ya *Fructus Hordei vulgaris germinatus* 6 g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 6 g

ZHEN REN YANG ZANG TANG

True Person Nourishing the Organs Decoction

Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 3 g

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 9 g
Rou Gui *Cortex Cinnamoni cassiae* 3 g
Wei Rou Dou Kou *Semen Myristicae fragrantis* 9 g
He Zi *Fructus Terminaliae chebulae* 6 g
(Zhi) Ying Su Ke *Pericarpium Papaveris somniferi*
 (honey-fried) 6 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g
Dang Gui *Radix Angelicae sinensis* 6 g
Mu Xiang *Radix Aucklandiae lappae* 6 g
Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata* 3 g

ZHEN WU TANG

True Warrior Decoction

Fu Zi *Radix lateralis Aconiti carmichaeli praeparata* 9 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g
Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 9 g
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae lactiflorae* 9 g

ZHENG QI TIAN XIANG SAN

Upright Qi Heavenly Fragrance Powder

Wu Yao *Radix Linderae strychnifoliae* 6 g
Gan Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis* 3 g
Zi Su Ye *Folium Perillae* 6 g
Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 4.5 g

ZHI BO DI HUANG WAN

Eight-Ingredient Rehmannia Pill (Anemarrhena-
 Phellodendron-Rehmannia Pill)

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata*
 24 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 12 g
Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 12 g
Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 9 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 9 g
Mu Dan Pi *Cortex Moutan radidis* 9 g
Zhi Mu *Radix Anemarrhenae asphodeloidis* 9 g
Huang Bo *Cortex Phellodendri* 9 g

ZHI GAN CAO TANG

Glycyrrhiza Decoction

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata*
 12 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g
Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 9 g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae* 48 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 9 g
E Jiao *Gelatinum Corii asini* 6 g
Huo Ma Ren *Semen Cannabis sativae* 9 g
Sheng Jiang *Rhizoma Zingiberis officinalis recens* 9 g
Da Zao *Fructus Ziziphi jujubae* 30 dates

ZHI SHI DAO ZHI WAN

Citrus Eliminating Stagnation Pill

Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 12 g
Da Huang *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei* 15 g
Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 6 g
Huang Qin *Radix Scutellariae baicalensis* 6 g
Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g
Ze Xie *Rhizoma Alismatis orientalis* 6 g
Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae* 6 g
Shen Qu *Massa Fermentata Medicinalis* 12 g

ZHI SHI GUA LOU GUI ZHI TANG

Citrus-Trichosanthes-Ramulus Cinnamomi Decoction

Gua Lou *Fructus Trichosanthis* 12 g
Xie Bai *Bulbus Allii* 9 g
Zhi Shi *Fructus Citri aurantii immaturus* 12 g
Hou Po *Cortex Magnoliae officinalis* 12 g
Gui Zhi *Ramulus Cinnamomi cassiae* 3 g

ZHU YE SHI GAO TANG

Lophaterus-Gypsum Decoction

Zhu Ye *Herba Lophatheri gracilis* 9 g
Shi Gao *Gypsum fibrosum* 30 g
Ren Shen *Radix Ginseng* 6 g
Mai Men Dong *Tuber Ophiopogonis japonici* 9 g
Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae ternatae* 9 g
Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 3 g
Geng Mi *Semen Oryzae sativae* 12 g

ZUO GUI WAN

Restoring the Left [Kidney] Pill

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata*
 15 g
Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 9 g
Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 9 g
Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 9 g
Chuan Niu Xi *Radix Cyathulae* 6 g
Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae sinensis* 9 g

Lu Jiao Jiao *Colla Cornu cervi* 9 g

Gui Ban Jiao *Colla Plastris testudinis* 9 g

ZUO GUI YIN

Restoring the Left [Kidney] Decoction

Shu Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae glutinosae praeparata*
6 g

Shan Yao *Radix Dioscoreae oppositae* 6 g

Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii chinensis* 6 g

Fu Ling *Sclerotium Poriae cocos* 6 g

Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni officinalis* 3 g

Zhi Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis praeparata*
3 g

ZUO JIN WAN

Left Metal Pill

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 15 g

Wu Zhu Yu *Fructus Evodiae rutaecarpae* 2 g

Appendix 3

History of Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine

This appendix (adapted from Deng Tie Tao 1988 'Practical Chinese Medicine Diagnosis' *Shi Yong Zhong Yi Zhen Duan Xue*, Shanghai Science Publishing House, Shanghai) will give a short historical overview of the development of diagnosis in Chinese medicine.¹ I will discuss the following historical aspects of diagnosis:

- pulse diagnosis
- channel diagnosis
- tongue diagnosis.

PULSE DIAGNOSIS

Pulse diagnosis is an extremely important diagnostic method in Chinese medicine. It is an incredibly sophisticated and accurate diagnostic tool that has undergone an interrupted historical development from the Zhou dynasty (11th century–771 BC) onwards.

Pulse diagnosis in early times

It is still not certain when the pulse was first referred to as a diagnostic tool. Some scholars think that pulse diagnosis was practised as early as the Zhou dynasty (11th century–771 BC). The ancient book called 'Rites of Zhou' says in a chapter entitled 'Medical Matters': '*Determine the prognosis of patients according to the five kinds of Qi, five kinds of sounds and five kinds of colours; also refer to the changes of the nine orifices and the pulsation of the nine internal organs.*' Some historians interpret the expression 'refer to the pulsation' as meaning the palpation of the pulse.

Bian Que

The historian Si Ma Qian writes about the ancient doctor Bian Que in his book 'Historical Records' (*Shi Ji*) as being the earliest expert of pulse diagnosis. This view is supported in other texts. For example, Han Fei of the Warring States period (476–221 BC) made similar statements in

his book 'Works of Han Fei' (*Han Fei Zi*). The book 'Works of Prince Huai Nan' (*Huai Nan Zi*) by Liu An says that Bian Que could diagnose diseases by taking the pulse.

Bian Que, also known as Qin Yue Ren, lived in the 5th century BC during the transition between the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period. He was a well-known medical practitioner of his time, who travelled widely and became an expert in internal medicine, surgery, gynecology, paediatrics and diseases of the elderly.

Ma Wang Dui texts

Three texts unearthed from the tomb of Ma Wang Dui deal with pulse diagnosis: 'Methods of Pulse Taking' (*Mai Fa*), 'Fatal Signs of Yin and Yang Pulses' (*Yin Yang Mai Si Hou*) and 'Moxibustion Book of the 11 Channels of the Foot and Hand' (*Zu Bi Shi Yi Mai Jiu Jing*). These three classics were unearthed from the no. 3 tomb of Ma Wang Dui and, although they were written anonymously, we know that they predate the 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine' (*Huang Di Nei Jing*).

'Fatal Signs of Yin and Yang Pulses' and 'Moxibustion Book of the 11 Channels of the Foot and Hand' discuss the importance of the pulse in making a prognosis. For example, the 'Moxibustion Book of the 11 Channels of the Foot and Hand' says that if the pulse is disrupted due to a disease of the three Yin, death will impend in less than 10 days; if the rhythm of the pulse feels like three people pounding grain, death will impend in less than 3 days; if the pulse feels like the one felt right after eating, death will impend in less than 3 days. The pulse described as feeling 'like three people pounding grain' could be the earliest record of arrhythmia in China. This image gives a vivid description of the pulse felt in arrhythmia, by conjuring up the rhythm and sound produced by three people working together to pound grain.

There is a description of a similar pulse in [Chapter 20](#) of the 'Simple Questions', namely a pulse that hits

the finger like the rhythm of three people pounding grain in a mortar: this indicates that the disease is quite severe.

The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine (*Huang Qi Nei Jing Su Wen*)

There are many chapters in the 'Simple Questions' (*Su Wen*) and 'Spiritual Axis' (*Ling Shu*) that deal with pulse diagnosis.

For example, Chapter 17 of the 'Simple Questions' says that the pulse should be taken in the early morning *'when the Yin Qi is not disturbed, the Yang Qi is not dissipated, the stomach is empty, the Qi of the channels is not full, the Qi of the Connecting channels is even and quiet and the circulation of Qi and Blood is not disrupted yet'*.² Chapter 18 of the 'Simple Questions' recommends evaluating the pulse according to the breathing.

In the 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine' the pulse was taken on nine different arteries in nine different locations of the body. These were called the 'nine regions' as described in Chapter 20 of the 'Simple Questions': *'There are three areas in the body, each area is divided into three which makes nine regions: these are used to determine life and death [i.e. prognosis], and in them, 100 diseases manifest, Deficiency and Excess are regulated and the pathogenic factors can be expelled.'*³

Chapter 19 of the 'Spiritual Axis' recommends taking the pulse at ST-9 Renying (carotid artery) and around the area of LU-9 Taiyuan, which the text called 'Portal of Qi' (*Qi Kou*) or 'Portal of Inch' (*Cun Kou*) where the radial artery runs. Renying reflects Yang Qi whereas *Qi Kou* reflects Yin Qi. Chapter 48 of the 'Spiritual Axis' also says that the *Cun Kou* pulse reflects the state of the Yin organs whereas the Renying pulse reflects that of the Yang organs. Later, Zhang Zhong Jing on the basis of the above theories developed pulse diagnosis at three locations, that is, at Renying (ST-9) and Fuyang (BL-59) to evaluate the Qi of the Stomach and at *Cun Kou* to evaluate the state of the 12 Channels.

There are passages in the 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine' which attribute the greatest importance to the pulse of the radial artery, that is, the *Cun Kou* (or *Qi Kou*) pulse. The importance attributed to this pulse is a precursor of the division of the arterial pulse at the wrist into three sections. For example, Chapter 3 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says that we should check the quality of the *Cun Kou* pulse (big or small, slow or rapid, slippery or choppy) to find the cause of

the disease. Chapter 5 of the 'Simple Questions' has a similar statement.

Chapter 21 of 'Simple Questions' says *'The balance of Qi, Blood, Yin and Yang can be gauged from the pulse at Qi Kou. Through the pulse at Qi Kou we can formulate a prognosis of the disease.'*⁴ Chapter 18 of the same text says: *'We can understand a disease from the fullness or emptiness of the pulse at Cun Kou.'*⁵ All these are examples of pulse diagnosis at *Qi Kou*: it is interesting to note that only the Front (*Cun*) and Rear (*Chi*) positions of the pulse are mentioned, without any mention of the Middle (*Guan*) position; moreover, the Front position is more important than the Rear one.

The 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine' reports at least 30 different pulse qualities, many of which are not used nowadays. These include Big, Small, Long, Short, Slippery, Choppy, Floating, Deep, Slow, Rapid, Flourishing, Firm, Tight, Soft, Slowed-down, Abrupt, Deficient, Excessive, Scattered, Knotted, Thin, Weak, Transverse, Asthmatic, Wiry, Hook-like, Feather-like, Stone-like, Hurried, Surging, Full, Throbbing, Thick, Suspended and Feeble. There are vivid descriptions of the feeling when the pulse hits the finger: for example, the Wiry Pulse is 'rigid, straight and long', the Hook-like pulse 'surging on and fading away', the Feather-like pulse 'light and feeble like a feather', the Stone-like pulse 'like a stone being thrown', etc.

Pulse diagnosis in Han, Jin, Sui and Tang dynasties

Yi Chun Yu

Yi Chun Yu was a famous practitioner living in the beginning of the Han dynasty. He followed the theories on pulse diagnosis handed down from previous dynasties, and developed his own rich experiences in his practice. He said 'When I treat patients, I must first palpate the patient's pulse, and then give the treatment accordingly'. More than 20 different pulse qualities are found in his records such as Wiry, Big, Deep, Intermittent, Tight, Small, Weak, Abrupt, Slippery, Rapid, Full, Firm, Scattered, etc. Yi Chun Yu palpated the pulse at the *Cun Kou* position and differentiated between the pulse felt at the superficial and deep levels.

Pulse diagnosis in the 'Classic of Difficulties' (*Nan Jing*)

The 'Classic of Difficulties' marked an extremely important milestone in the history of pulse diagnosis

because it established for the first time pulse diagnosis based on the radial artery pulse at the wrist divided into three sections (*Cun*, *Guan* and *Chi*) and three levels. These were the new 'nine regions' of the pulse; in other words, whereas in the times of the 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine' the 'nine regions' were nine different arteries in different places of the body, henceforth they were all on the radial artery at the wrist.

So, the 'Classic of Difficulties' (AD100) established for the first time the practice of taking the pulse at the radial artery: as mentioned above, this pulse was variously called *Qi Kou* ('Portal of Qi'), *Cun Kou* ('Portal of Inch [Front pulse position]') and *Mai Kou* ('Portal of Pulse'). The 'Classic of Difficulties' says: 'The 12 main channels have their own arteries but the pulse can be taken only at the *Cun Kou* [LU-9 position] reflecting the life and death of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs ... The *Cun Kou* is the beginning and end point of the energy of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs and that is why we can take the pulse at this position only.'⁶ The last part of this statement is interesting since the description of the pulse of the *Cun Kou* is described as the 'beginning and end point of the energy of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs'; this seems to imply an understanding of the circulation of blood as a closed circuit.

Chapter 1 of the 'Classic of Difficulties' explains why the pulse is felt at *Cun Kou*:

*Twelve channels have places where a pulse can be felt and yet one selects only the *Cun Kou* to determine the state of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs, why is this? The *Cun Kou* constitutes the great meeting place of the vessels, it is the place where the pulse of the Hand Greater Yin [Lungs] beats ... the *Cun Kou* is the beginning and end of the 5 Yin and 6 Yang organs and therefore only the *Cun Kou* is used [for diagnosis].'⁷*

The second chapter of the 'Classic of Difficulties' explains how its author arrived at feeling the pulse at the three positions called Inch or Front, Gate or Middle and Foot or Rear (*Cun*, *Guan* and *Chi*):

The Foot and Inch sections of the pulse are the meeting point of the channels. The distance from the Gate position [LU-8, level with the radial apophysis] to the Foot position in the elbow represents the Foot-Interior and it reflects the Yin energies. The distance from the Gate position to the point Fish Margin [the thenar eminence] is the Foot-Exterior and it reflects the Yang energies. Hence,

the distance of 1 inch is separated from the distance of 1 foot [from the Gate position to the elbow crease], so that the distance of 1 foot is represented by 1 inch. Hence the Yin energies are reflected within that 1-inch section of the foot-long section and the Yang energies are reflected within a 9-fen [nine-tenths of an inch] section of the Inch section. The total length of the Foot and Inch section extends over 1 inch and 9 fen; hence one speaks of Foot and Inch sections.'⁸

In other words, the distance from the Gate-*Guan* (or Middle) position of the pulse (on LU-8 Jingqu) to the crease of the elbow measures 1 Chinese foot and reflects the Yin energies; the distance from the Gate-*Guan* position to the crease of the wrist is 9 *fen* (nine-tenths of an inch) and reflects the Yang energies. However, a 1-inch section is separated from the 1-foot distance from the Gate-*Guan* position to the elbow crease to represent the Yin energies; in other words, this 1-inch section is representative of the 1-foot section.

Chapter 18 of the 'Classic of Difficulties' describes the three different pressures applied to the pulse:

There are three sections, Inch, Gate and Foot, and three pressures, superficial, middle and deep [which makes] 9 regions. The Upper section pertains to Heaven and reflects diseases from the chest to the head; the Middle section pertains to Person and reflects diseases from the diaphragm to the umbilicus; the Lower section pertains to Earth and reflects diseases from the umbilicus to the feet. [One must] examine [these sections] before needling.'⁹

This passage establishes clearly the principle, adopted by all successive doctors, that the Inch section of the pulse corresponds to the Upper Burner and diseases from the chest upwards, the Gate section to the Middle Burner and diseases from the diaphragm to the umbilicus, and the Foot section to the Lower Burner and diseases from the umbilicus to the feet.

Zhang Zhong Jing

Zhang Zhong Jing discusses pulse diagnosis in many passages of his celebrated 'Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases' (*Shang Han Lun*). He emphasized paying equal attention to the pulse as to clinical manifestations when identifying patterns; in particular, he put the most emphasis on the pulse at *Cun Kou*.

In all, Zhang Zhong Jing mentions more than 20 pulse qualities in his book and he classified them into two broad groups of Yang (e.g. Big, Floating, Rapid,

Slippery, etc.) and Yin pulse qualities (e.g. Deep, Choppy, Weak, etc.).

Zhang Zhong Jing was good at using pulse diagnosis to analyse the aetiology and pathology of a disease and to guide treatment. For example he says: *'When the pulse is Floating and Tight at the Cun Kou, the Floating quality indicates Wind while the Tight quality Cold'*.

Moreover, Zhang Zhong Jing also paid attention to the correlation between pulse and body shape. For example, he said *'If a fat person displays a Floating pulse and a thin person a Deep one, this should draw our attention. In general, fat people are likely to have a Deep pulse while thin people a Floating pulse.'*

Zhang Zhong Jing also made an interesting correlation between pulse quality and the emotional causes of disease. He says: *'In case of shock the pulse will be Fine and the complexion pale; in case of shame, the pulse will be Floating and the complexion red.'*

The 'Pulse Classic' (*Mai Jing*)

The 'Pulse Classic' (*Mai Jing*) was written by Wang Shu He at the juncture between the Han and Jin dynasties, in approximately AD280. This is the first text dedicated entirely to pulse diagnosis. This book had a great influence on the study of pulse diagnosis not only in Chinese medicine but also in Arabic and Persian medicine.

The 'Pulse Classic' consolidated and further clarified the division of the pulse in three sections and the organs assigned to each section. This book assigns the Heart and Small Intestine to the left Front position, the Liver and Gall-Bladder to the left Middle position, the Kidneys and Bladder to the left Rear position, the Lungs and Large Intestine to the right Front positions, the Spleen and Stomach to the right Middle position, and the Kidneys, Bladder and Triple Burner to the right Rear position.

The 'Pulse Classic' mentioned 24 pulse qualities and described their feeling and clinical significance in a systematic way for the first time. The pulse qualities included Floating, Hollow, Surging, Slippery, Rapid, Hurried, Wiry, Tight, Deep, Hidden, Leather-like, Full, Feeble, Choppy, Fine, Soft, Weak, Deficient, Scattered, Slowed-down, Slow, Knotted, Intermittent and Throbbing. The descriptions used for such pulse qualities became the standard for later texts on pulse diagnosis. Wang Shu He also systematically compared and contrasted similar pulse qualities to make their differentiation easier.

The 'Pulse Classic' also described the clinical significance of each pulse quality systematically. For example, it says: *'The Slow pulse indicates Cold, the Choppy pulse deficiency of Blood, the Slowed-down pulse Deficiency, and the Surging pulse Heat'*.

The 'Thousand Golden Ducats Prescriptions' (*Qian Jin Fang*)

The book 'Thousand Golden Ducats Prescriptions' by Sun Si Miao consolidated and expanded the 'Pulse Classic' views on the three sections of the pulse, the three depths applied to finger pressure and the assignment of organs to pulse positions. Sun Si Miao emphasized the importance of pulse diagnosis and the following excerpt is interesting and apt: *'The pulse is an important tool for practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine. How can one practise traditional Chinese medicine without a good understanding of the pulse? All practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine should study the pulse carefully.'*

Sun Si Miao associated the pulse positions only with the Yin organs, with the Heart, Liver and Kidney on the left and Lungs, Spleen and Gate of Life (*Ming Men*) on the right. He correlated the pulse to body shape and also emotional state:

It is abnormal for people of large size to have a small, Fine pulse, for thin people to have a Big pulse, for happy people to have a Deficient pulse, for unhappy people to have a Full pulse, for people of hot temper to have a Slowed-down pulse, for calm people to have an Agitated pulse, for people of strong body build to have a Fine pulse, and for people of weak body constitution to have a Big pulse.

Pulse diagnosis in Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties

During the Song dynasty, pulse diagnosis continued to develop and many of the rhymes since used as a mnemonic aid were composed in this time. For example, a collection of rhymes to memorize pulse qualities and their clinical significance is the 'Pulse in Verse' (*Mai Jue*) by Cui Jia Yan of the Southern Song dynasty.

During the Song dynasty, illustrated books on pulse diagnosis were published for the first time. For example, Xu Shu Wei wrote the 'Illustrated Book of 36 Pulses' (*San Shi Liu Zhong Mai Fa Tu*), which is regarded as the first of these.

During the Ming dynasty, Zhang Shi Xian wrote the 'Pulse Verses with Illustrations' (*Tu Zhu Mai Jue*), which contains 22 illustrations. During the Qing Dynasty, He Sheng Ping wrote the 'Essentials of Pulse with Illustrations' (*Mai Yao Tu Zhu*).

Throughout the Song, Ming and Qing dynasties, doctors were engaged in trying to make pulse diagnosis easier to master. As there are between 28 and 32 pulse qualities, many doctors tried to find some kind of system to memorize them. The simplest classification was that into Yin and Yang pulses. Another way of classifying pulse qualities is according to various criteria, such as rate, rhythm, strength, shape and depth. A third way of systematizing the pulse qualities is to divide them up into pairs of opposite qualities (e.g. Slow-Rapid, Floating-Deep, Slippery-Choppy, Full-Empty, etc.).

The 'Pulse Classic of the Pin Hu Master' (*Pin Hu Mai Xue*) written in 1564 by Li Shi Zhen was a landmark in the history of pulse diagnosis. The book consisted of two parts. The first part was written by his father Li Yan Wen and it introduced the general theory of pulse diagnosis, whereas the second part, written by Li Shi Zhen himself, describes palpation of the pulse and the clinical significance of 27 pulse qualities. The book was written in the 'Seven-Word style', a poetic, lucid and lively style which makes it easy to learn and memorize.

Works on pulse diagnosis were quite numerous in the Ming and Qing dynasties. The most well-known of this period include the following:

- 'About the Pulse' (*Mai Yu*, 1584) by Wu Kun
- the chapter 'Discussion on the Spirit of the Pulse' in the 'Complete Works of Jing Yue' (*Jing Yue Quan Shu*, 1624) by Zhang Jie Bin
- the 'Orthodox Meaning of the Pulse Theory' (*Mai Li Zheng Yi*, 1635) by Zou Zhi Kui
- the 'Attention for Diagnosticians' (*Zhen Jia Zheng Yan*, 1642) by Li Zhong Zhi
- the 'Collection of Pulse Verses' (*Mai Jue Hui Bian*, 1667) compiled by Qu Liang
- the 'Thorough Knowledge of the Pulse' (*Mai Guan*, 1711) by Wang Xian
- the 'Pulse Studies of Hui Xi' (*Hui Xi Mai Xue*) by Xu Ling Tai
- the 'Seeking the Truth for the Theory of the Pulse' (*Mai Li Qiu Zhen*, 1769) by Huang Gong Xiu
- the 'Orthodox Classic of the Theory of the Pulse' (*Mai Li Zong Jing*, 1868) by Zhang Futian
- the 'Truth about the Theory of the Pulse' (*Mai Li Cun Zhen*, 1876) by Yu Xian Ting
- the 'Brief Discussion of the Theory of the Pulse' (*Mai Yi Jian Mo*, 1892) by Zhou Xue Hai.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, feudal customs became very strict with regard to relations between men and women. It was considered improper for a doctor (in those times a man) to palpate the body of women. Sometimes even the interrogation of the patient was conducted through the intermediary of family members.

As for pulse diagnosis, this was often carried out by interposing a thin piece of silk on the woman's wrist to act as a barrier between her wrist and the doctor's fingers. During the Ming dynasty, Li Chan said in 'Rules for the Practice of Medicine' (*Xi Yi Gui Ge*):

When a woman is treated, her symptoms, appetite and the tongue picture were asked about through her family members. Then the treatment was given accordingly. Sometimes in a severe case, the practitioner diagnoses the patient through the bed curtain, or in a mild case, through the door curtain. In both conditions, a thin piece of silk is used to cover the wrist of the patient when the pulse is palpated. The practitioner often prepares such a piece of silk himself because sometimes it was not easy for poor families to get one.

Pulse diagnosis in modern times

In 1926, Yun Tie Jiao wrote the 'Explanation of the Pulse' (*Mai Xue Fa Wei*). This book tries to integrate the traditional Chinese view with a modern view of pulse diagnosis.

Since 1949, modern scientific methods and technology have been employed for the study of the pulse. Some doctors have researched the division of the pulse into three sections and the connection of the pulse with the channel system.

CHANNEL DIAGNOSIS

Channel diagnosis is based on the observation of changes occurring on the skin overlying the channels. Since the Warring States period, the term 'channel' referred to anything which is seen on the skin, any-where on the body. The changes observed pertain to the Connecting channel portion of the Main channels as it is only the Connecting channels that communicate with the skin through the Superficial and Minute Connecting channels. For example, visible subcutaneous veins and venules are a manifestation of the Blood Connecting channels; although they are venules from the Western point of

view, they are part of the channel system from the Chinese point of view.

The blood vessels (venules) visible on the surface of the skin are always a reflection of the Connecting channels. When they become visible, the blood vessels are an expression of the percolation of the Blood Connecting channels towards the surface of the skin (the Blood Connecting vessels at the deep level of the Connecting channels).

Chapter 17 of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'The Main channels are in the Interior, their branches and horizontal [or crosswise] forming the Connecting channels: branching out from these are the Minute Connecting. When these are Full with stagnant Blood they should be drained with a bleeding needle; when they are deficient, they should be tonified with herbs.'*¹⁰

Chapter 10 of the same text says: *'The Main channels are deep and hidden between the muscles and cannot be seen; only the Spleen channel can be seen as it emerges from above the internal malleolus and it has no place to hide. The Connecting channels are superficial and can be seen.'*¹¹ The same chapter also says: *'When the Connecting channels are greenish-bluish it indicates Cold and pain; when they are red it indicates Heat.'*¹²

Apart from the blood vessels, the colour of the skin itself reflects the condition of the Connecting channels: red indicates Heat, green indicates pain, purple indicates Blood stasis, and bluish indicates Blood stasis and Cold.

Channel diagnosis includes several methods of diagnosis as follows:

- observation of the thenar eminence
- observation of the ear
- plucking of the vein in the inner leg
- observation of sublingual veins
- observation of the index finger in babies.

Observation of the thenar eminence

The thenar eminence shows the state of the Stomach. **Chapter 10** of the 'Spiritual Axis' relates the colour of the thenar eminence to the state of the Stomach and says: *'When the Stomach has Cold, the thenar eminence is bluish; when the Stomach has Heat, the thenar eminence is reddish; if it is suddenly black, it indicates chronic Painful Obstruction Syndrome; if it is sometimes red, sometimes dark and sometimes bluish it indicates alternation of Heat*

*and Cold; if it is bluish and short, it indicates deficiency of Qi.'*¹³ **Chapter 74** of the same text says: *'When the thenar eminence has bluish venules, it indicates Cold in the Stomach.'*¹⁴

The chapter 'Prescriptions for children, women and the elderly' in the 'Thousand Golden Ducats Prescriptions' (*Qian Jin Yao Fang*) by Sun Si Miao describes the use of the venules on the thenar eminence to diagnose epilepsy or infantile convulsions. It says: *'A black colour of the channels in the thenar eminence is a sign of epilepsy or infantile convulsions; a red colour Heat'.*

Observation of the ear

This method is based on the observation of changes in the veins on the back of the ear in small children. **Chapter 74** of the 'Spiritual Axis' says: *'When an infant is sick, if the hair of the baby all stands up, it indicates a very bad prognosis. If a bluish vessel appears on the ear, it indicates abdominal pain due to spasm.'*¹⁵ This method was further developed in later times. For example, the chapter 'Explanation of chicken pox and measles' in the 'Complete Works of Jing Yue' (*Jing Yue Quan Shu*, 1624) says: *'Chickenpox is mild if red veins appear on both ears. It is severe if they look purple'.*

During the Qing dynasty, Xia Yu Zhu noticed that the colour of the veins on the back of the ear could change according to weather, and thought that it was not, therefore, enough to make a prognosis based on the colour of these veins.

Plucking of the vein in the inner leg

The details for this method of diagnosis can be found in **Chapter 20** of the 'Simple Questions'. This diagnosis is carried out by placing the fingers of the left hand gently on the skin 5 *cun* above the medial malleolus while the right hand plucks the skin above the medial malleolus gently. The results are interpreted as follows:

- if a vein appears gradually extending to 5 *cun* or more, this is normal
- if a vein appears quickly and is quite thick, this indicates a pathology
- if it appears slowly but does not reach 5 *cun*, or if it does not appear at all in response to the plucking, the prognosis is bad.

Observation of sublingual veins

This diagnostic method was first recorded in the 'Discussion on the Origin of Symptoms in Illness' (Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun, AD610) by Chao Yuan Fang.

Observation of the sublingual veins is the subject of intense research in modern China. It is believed that they may be used to determine the likelihood of future heart disease and hypertension.

Observation of the index finger in babies

This is a method of diagnosing diseases based on observation of the veins on the palmar aspect of the index finger on infants. It has a long history, probably starting in the Tang dynasty when it was first mentioned by Wang Chao in 'Verses on the Immortal's Water Mirror with Illustrations' (Xian Ren Shui Jing Tu Jue), and was widely used in clinical practice throughout China. It is still regarded as being a significant method of diagnosis today.

Origin of observation of the index finger in babies

Some diagnostic methods have traditionally always been applied specifically to infants; these include observation of veins on the back of the ear, observation of the root of the nose and observation of the index finger veins. These methods are generally used for children under the age of 3 years.

It is not clear when this diagnostic technique started. A book from 1750 'Complete Works of Paediatrics' (You You Ji Cheng) by Chen Fu Zheng dates this method back to the Song dynasty:

The diagnosis by the channels on the index finger was initiated by Qian Zhong Yang in Song Dynasty. The finger was divided into three Gates: the Gate of Wind, the Gate of Qi and the Gate of Life. The verse recited that the condition was mild if the channels reached the Gate of Wind, severe if it reached the Gate of Qi and dangerous if it reached the Gate of Life.

Xu Shu Wei (Song dynasty) says in his 'Effective Prescriptions for Universal Relief' (Pu Ji Ben Shi Fang):

In infants, it is difficult to palpate the pulse and some practitioners refer to the colour in Hu Kou (the index finger) and the temperature of the limbs. A purple colour

indicates Wind; a red colour indicates invasion of Cold; a blue colour indicates infantile convulsions; a white colour indicates malnutrition; a yellow colour indicates a disease of the Spleen.

Observation of the index finger in the Song and Yuan dynasties

During the Song and Yuan dynasties, the most detailed record about the observation of the colour of the channels in the index finger can be found in a book on paediatrics of the Song dynasty entitled 'A Book on Paediatrics' (You You Xin Shu). Liu Fang compiled the book together with Wang Li and Wang Shi. He says:

The proximal portion of the index finger is known as the Gate of Wind, the middle one is the Gate of Qi and the distal part of the finger is known as the Gate of Life. Some people emphasize using the left hand in boys and the right hand in girls. I think that it should be the same on boys and girls.

Liu Fang described eight common shapes of the veins: a shape like the skeleton of the fish, a shape like a suspended needle, a shape like the Chinese character for water, a sigmoid shape, an annular shape, a shape like an earthworm, an irregular shape and a shape like a fish-eye.

Wei Yi Lin described the clinical significance of the veins on the index finger of babies in the book 'Effective Formulae Handed down for Generations' (Shi Yi De Xiao Fang). He says:

Observation over the channels of the index finger should be made on the left hand for boys and on the right hand for girls. If the veins are within the Gate of Wind, it usually indicates convulsion due to fright by birds or people. If it is red and indistinct, it indicates fright by fire; if it is black, it indicates fright by water or fighting; if it is bluish, it indicates fright by thunder or animals. If there is a bluish curved line shown slightly, it is a sign of acute infantile convulsions. If the line is crooked, it is a sign of poor digestion. If the veins reach the Gate of Qi and are purple, it indicates infantile malnutrition resulting from infantile convulsions. If the veins are bluish, it indicates infantile malnutrition affecting the Liver Channel. If they are whitish in colour, it indicates affliction of the Lung Channel. If they are black in colour, it indicates the disease is severe. If a bluish black line going through the three gates appears in the Gate of Life and

runs oblique towards the fingernail, there is no hope for the patient.

Observation of the index finger in babies during the Ming and Qing dynasties

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, observation of the veins on the index finger was developed further. All pediatric books of this period include a chapter on observation of the veins of the index finger. The book 'Complete Book on Experiences in Paediatrics' (*Quan You Xin Jian I*, 1468) by Kou Ping contained detailed descriptions of the channels in the face and the three gates on the index finger. It included more than 40 pictures and the record of 13 shapes of the channels in the index finger.

Yu Tuan discusses diagnosis by the index finger in babies in his book 'Orthodox Medical Problems' (*Yi Xue Zheng Chuan*). He pointed out:

It is difficult to diagnose diseases of small children by palpating the pulse at Cun Kou at the route of the Lung Channel. For small children aged between 1 to 6 years old, the veins in the three Gates of the index finger can be used to diagnose diseases and determine their prognosis. Check the left hand for boys and right hand for girls.

It contained 19 pictures and a record of 17 abnormal shapes of the veins on the index finger.

The book 'Explanation to Questions about Paediatrics' (*You Ke Shi Mi*, 1774) by Shen Jin Ao recorded 13 abnormal appearances of the veins on the index finger, while the 'Golden Mirror of Medicine' (*Yi Zong Jin Jian*, 1742) by Wu Qian recorded 20.

Observation of the index finger in babies in modern times

Since 1949, diagnosis based on the appearance of veins on the index finger in babies has been developed further. Now it is verified by anatomy that the veins in the index finger are actually the palmar vein, which runs into the cephalic vein. Its location is superficial so that it is easily observed.

Observation shows that the vein is clearly exposed on children under 3 years old. However, some think that it can be used as a reference for diagnosis for all children under school age. The rule about observing the left hand for boys and left for girls is now considered insignificant.

Research indicates that the three Gates are significant for the understanding of diseases. Veins can appear longer when there is an increase in venous pressure, the peripheral blood vessels are dilated or there is malnutrition. This fits with the traditional view that 'a mild disease will manifest with the veins within the Gate of Wind, severe diseases with the veins within the Gate of Qi, and critical conditions with the veins reaching the Gate of Life'.

TONGUE DIAGNOSIS

Warring States period (475–221BC)

Several passages in the 'Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine' mention tongue diagnosis. For examples:

*If the tongue is loose, there is drooling and the patient is irritable, choose the Leg Lesser-Yin channel.*¹⁶

*If the Qi of the Leg Terminal Yin [Liver] is exhausted the lips turn blue and the tongue curls.*¹⁷

This passage shows that in the 'Simple Questions' and 'Spiritual Axis', tongue diagnosis was based primarily on observation of the tongue-body shape rather than tongue-body colour. Other tongue-body shapes mentioned in these two texts are rolled, stiff, withered and short.

The tongue coating is mentioned in a few passages. For example: '*When the Lungs are invaded by Heat ... the body hair stands up, the patient has aversion to cold, the tongue coating is yellow and the body hot.*'¹⁸

Han Dynasty (206BC–AD220)

During this time the most important contribution to tongue diagnosis is contained in the Zhang Zhong Jing's classics 'Discussion of Cold-induced Diseases' (*Shang Han Lun*) and 'Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet' (*Jin Gui Yao Lue Fang*). For example:

*A yellow tongue coating and a feeling of fullness in the intestines indicate excess Heat. If purging is applied and the Heat cleared, the yellow coating disappears.*¹⁹

*In Bright-Yang disorders with constipation, abdominal fullness and vomiting, the tongue has a white coating.*²⁰

*If the patient has a feeling of fullness of the chest, dry lips and the tongue body colour is bluish ... it indicates Blood stasis.*²¹

Sui and Tang dynasties (AD581–907)

The two most important works containing a discussion of tongue diagnosis are the 'Discussion on the Origin of Symptoms in Illness' (*Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun*, 610) by Chao Yuan Fang and the 'Thousand Golden Ducats Prescriptions' (*Qian Jin Yao Fang*, 652) by Sun Si Miao. For example, the 'Discussion on the Origin of Symptoms in Illness' says: 'When the tongue has no coating, attacking methods of treatment [e.g. purgation] cannot be used.' The 'Thousand Golden Ducats Prescriptions' says: 'In Full patterns of the Heart the tongue is cracked'.

Song, Jin and Yuan dynasties (960–1368)

It was during this time that tongue diagnosis became a specialized subject. Li Dong Yuan attached special importance to dryness of the tongue in his 'Discussion on Stomach and Spleen' (*Pi Wei Lun*).

A doctor known only by his surname, Ao, wrote the first book devoted entirely to tongue diagnosis towards the beginning of the Yuan dynasty. Later in the Yuan dynasty, Du Qing Bi revised this book and published a revised edition under the title 'Ao's Record of the Golden Mirror of Cold-induced Diseases'. The tonguebody colours mentioned are Pale, Red and Blue; tongue shapes mentioned are Flabby, Swollen and Deviated, among others.

Ming and Qing dynasties (1368–1911)

During the Ming dynasty several books on tongue diagnosis were published, all modelled on 'Ao's Record of the Golden Mirror of Cold-induced Diseases' mentioned above. The most prominent of these was Shen Dou Yuan's 'Essential Methods of Observation of the Tongue in Cold-induced Diseases', which describes 135 types of tongue.

Several texts on tongue diagnosis were written during the Qing dynasty. Zhang Dan Xian wrote the 'Mirror of the Tongue in Cold-induced Diseases' containing 120 illustrations. Fu Song Yuan wrote 'A Collection of Tongues and Coatings', which departs from the tradition of seeing tongue diagnosis only in the context of Cold-induced diseases.

In 1906, Liang Te Yan wrote the 'Differentiation of Syndromes by Examination of the Tongue', which illustrates and describes 148 types of tongues.

Modern times

Many new books on tongue diagnosis have been published since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Chinese medical journals regularly report the results of a considerable amount of research carried out on tongue diagnosis. A particular aspect of tongue diagnosis, the sublingual veins, is the subject of considerable research which investigates the use of the sublingual veins as a diagnostic sign in heart disease.

The following are examples of articles on tongue diagnosis which have appeared in the *Journal of Chinese Medicine* (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*):

- 'Clinical significance of Dark-Red tongue'²²
- 'Tongue and patterns in hepatitis B'²³
- 'Tongue appearance in bone fractures'²⁴
- 'Tongue appearance in burns septicaemia'²⁵
- 'Tongue appearance in schizophrenia'²⁶
- 'Tongue appearance before and after operations'²⁷
- 'Tongue changes after burns'²⁸
- 'Tongue changes in cancer, chemotherapy and radiotherapy'²⁹
- 'Tongue changes in diabetes'³⁰
- 'Tongue coating after surgery for stomach cancer'³¹
- 'Tongue coating in lung cancer'³²
- 'Tongue diagnosis and identification of patterns'³³
- 'Tongue diagnosis and enteroscopy'³⁴
- 'Tongue diagnosis and gastroscopy'³⁵
- 'Sublingual veins in blood stasis'³⁶

END NOTES

1. Unless otherwise stated, all texts referred to and quotations in this appendix are cited in Deng Tie Tao 1988 *Practical Chinese Medicine Diagnosis Shi Yong Zhong Yi Zhen Duan Xue*, Shanghai Publishing House, Shanghai.
2. 1979 *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine – Simple Questions (Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen)*, People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 102. First published c. 100 BC.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
6. Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine 1979 *A Revised Explanation of the Classic of Difficulties (Nan Jing Jiao Shi)*, People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, pp. 1–2. First published c. AD100.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
8. *Simple Questions*, pp. 4–5.
9. *Classic of Difficulties*, p. 46.
10. 1981 *Spiritual Axis (Ling Shu Jing)*, People's Health Publishing House, Beijing, p. 50. First published c. 100 BC.

11. Ibid., p. 37.
12. Ibid., p. 37.
13. Ibid., p. 120, para 37.
14. Ibid., p. 133.
15. Ibid., p. 133.
16. Spiritual Axis, p. 129, para 30.
17. Ibid., p. 30.
18. Ibid., p. 186.
19. He Ren 1981 A New Explanation of the Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet (*Jin Gui Yao Lue Xin Jie*), Zhejiang Science Publishing House, Zhejiang, p. 65. The Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet was written by Zhang Zhong Jing c. AD200.
20. Shang Han Lun Research Group of the Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine 1980 An Explanation of the Discussion of Cold- Induced Diseases (*Shang Han Lun Jiao Shi*), Shanghai Science Publishing House, Shanghai, p. 948.
21. Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Cabinet, p. 138.
22. Lan Xin Sheng et al. 1992 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 5, 1992, p. 46.
23. Chen Han Cheng and Xu Wen Da 1988 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 4, 1988, p. 53.
24. Fractures Group of Chinese Medicine Hospital of Dang Shu City (Jiangsu Province) 1986 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 11, p. 41.
25. Kong Zhao Xia 1980 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 8, p. 26.
26. Chen Wei Ren 1995 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 12, p. 741.
27. Qin Ji Hua 1987 Journal of the Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, no. 2, 1987, p. 17.
28. Han Ji Xun 1988 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 9, 1988, p. 45.
29. Li Su Juan 1999 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 10, 1999, p. 636.
30. Guo Sai Shan 1989 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 2, 1989, p. 33.
31. Fang Dong Xiang 1999 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 7, 1999, p. 433.
32. Xu Zhen Ye 1993 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 6, 1993, p. 334.
33. Cai Yu Qin 1993 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 12, 1993, p. 716.
34. Dai Wei Zheng 1994 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 1, 1994, p. 43.
35. Dai Hao Liang 1984 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 10, 1984, p. 74.
36. Jin Shi Ying 1992 Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), no. 3, 1992, p. 42.

Appendix 4

The Classics Of Chinese Medicine

The following is a brief description of the classics of Chinese medicine that I mention most frequently. As I mention some of the classics extensively, it might help the reader to see these in their historical context. This is not a comprehensive list of the classics of Chinese medicine (which would have to be much longer) but simply of those which I mention most frequently. For each classic, I also give the reasons why I mention them frequently and what they add to our clinical practice in the 21st century.

THE YELLOW EMPEROR'S CLASSIC OF INTERNAL MEDICINE (between 300 and 100 BC, Warring States Period, Qin and Han dynasties)

Huang Di Nei Jing

The authorship and date of the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine” is the subject of intense conjecture. The best source for a discussion of the authorship and date of this classic is Unschuld’s “Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen: Nature, Knowledge, Imagery in an Ancient Chinese Medical Text”.¹

What is certain is that the Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine was written between 300 and 100 BC and that it was changed by many different authors over the centuries. My Chinese teachers in Nanjing thought that this classic could not be older than the times of Zou Yan (c. 350-270 BC) who was the formulator of the main theory of the 5 Elements.

That this classic received the contributions and changes by many different authors is obvious from the variety of subjects treated and most of all, by the apparent lack of coordination among subjects. What is also generally accepted is that the bulk of the text we use nowadays was compiled by Wang Bing during the Tang

dynasty (AD 762). The text was subsequently edited three times during the Song dynasty (960-1279).

The “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine” consists of two parts, each in 81 chapters: the “Simple Questions” (*Su Wen*) and the “Spiritual Axis” (*Ling Shu*). Generally speaking, the “Simple Questions” deals more with the general theory of Chinese medicine while the “Spiritual Axis” is mostly about acupuncture.

The importance of the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine” in the history of Chinese medicine cannot be overemphasized. It is the earliest source of physiology, pathology, diagnosis and treatment in Chinese medicine. Besides medicine, this classic also contains theories of meteorology, astrology and calendar. The following is a partial list of the main topics of significance of the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine”:

1. It established a systematic theory of the channels.
2. It deals in depth with the theories of Yin-Yang and the 5 Elements.
3. It discusses the nature and origin of different types of Qi.
4. It describes the physiology and pathology of the Internal Organs.
5. It determines the location of 160 acupuncture points and their names.
6. It describes the various types of needles and their use.
7. It defines the function of the acupuncture points and their contra-indications.
8. It discusses many needling techniques including the reinforcing and reducing methods.
9. It describes the diagnosis, identification of patterns and treatment of many diseases.

From a philosophical point of view, it is clear that the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine” was influenced by several different philosophical trends which arose during the Warring States Period (475-221 BC). In particular, this classic shows the influence of the

Confucian, Daoist, Legalist and Naturalist schools of thought.

The influence of the Naturalist School (called “School of Yin-Yang”) is manifested throughout this classic because the theory of Yin-Yang and the 5 Elements pervades the whole book.

The influence of the Daoist school of thought is evident in the frequent discussion of the ways or “nourishing life” (*yang sheng* 養生), i.e. advice on breathing, exercises, diet, and life-style to prolong life and avoid disease.

The influence of the Confucian school is manifested by the conception of the Internal Organs as ministers of a government. The political views of Confucianism are very much reflected in Chinese medicine where the Internal Organs are compared to government officials with the Heart being the Emperor or Monarch. Each internal organ is compared to a Minister and health depends on good “governance” by the Internal Organs.

There are other aspects of the Confucian philosophy that pervade the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine”. One is the view of the lifestyle practices of *yang sheng* (“nourishing life”) as a ritual with its rules and duties. The Confucian philosophy was all about ethics and the practices that would ensure harmony in the family, society and the State. Rites (*Li* 禮) were considered to be part of this ethics system and they were considered very important by Confucius. Interestingly, the character *Li* for “rites” has similarities to that for “body” (*Ti* 體).

禮 *Li* (rites, ritual)

體 *Ti* (body)

The left side of the character for *Li* (rites) is the same as what is on the left of *Shen*, i.e. something supernatural, or something also related to sacrificial rites. The right side represents a sacrificial vessel.

The right side of the character for *Ti* (the body) is the same as above, i.e. a sacrificial vessel while the left side represents bones, i.e. the structure of the body.

The implication is that the body is like a rite, and that the rules of *Yang Sheng* are like a ritual with its rules of conduct. Obeying these rules is called *shun* which means “to conform with” while disobeying them is called *ni*, i.e. rebelling, going against the rules. Interestingly these two terms occur frequently in Chinese medicine and in the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine”. *Ni* [逆] is the term used for “rebellious” Qi (or counterflow Qi), while *shun* [順] is its opposite, i.e. Qi that flows in the correct direction.

Thus, ill health is not only a medical problem but also an ethical one stemming from not abiding by the rules of behaviour.

Finally, the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine” bears the imprint also of the Legalist School. The Legalist School was called the School of Law (*Fa Jia* 法家) in ancient China. This school of thought flourished during the Warring States Period and it prevailed during the Qin dynasty (221-206 BC), a brief dynasty started by the first emperor Qin Shi Huang Di who enthusiastically adopted the principles of government advocated by the Legalist School. Qin Shi Huang Di was the emperor who had the terracotta army built.

The state of Qin in Western China was the first to adopt Legalist doctrines. The Qin were so successful that by 221 BC they had conquered the other Chinese states and unified the empire after centuries of war. Legalist ideas on human nature, society and government could not be further from those of Confucius: the Legalists thought that human nature is essentially unruly and order in society can be kept only by strict laws and harsh punishments, not through ethical behaviour as the Confucianists thought.

What is interesting about the Legalist school from the Chinese medicine point of view, is the fact that the Qin dynasty (which adopted Legalist ideas) was the first to unify China. They established irrigation, unified weights, coins, Chinese script, measures and other things such as the gauge of wheel axles throughout China. The first Qin emperor also initiated a huge program of road building and canals digging. Another important innovation of the Qin dynasty was the fostering of trade among various regions of China on a huge scale.

The Qin dynasty therefore provided the first model of a unified state with an emperor, a central government, local officials, thousands of miles of new roads and a state-wide irrigation system. This provided the first three metaphors of Chinese medicine, i.e. the political metaphor in which the Heart is the emperor, the other Internal Organs are the officials; the road metaphor in which the channels are like a system of roads; and the water metaphor in which Qi, Blood and Body Fluids flow in a system of canals, rivers and reservoirs.

One can see an influence of the Legalist school also in the therapeutic approach of the “Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine”, i.e. just as human nature cannot be relied upon and must be “straightened” with strict laws and harsh punishments, the body’s Qi must

be regulated by attacking pathogenic factors decisively and by making sure that the “ruler” and officials do their jobs properly.

Indeed, one could see some of the therapeutic interventions of Chinese medicine - burning moxa, using sweating, vomiting and purging, expelling pathogenic factors, etc. almost as Legalist “punishments”!

THE CLASSIC OF DIFFICULTIES (ca. 100 BC, Han dynasty)

Nan Jing

The Nan Jing was written in approximately 100 BC by Qin Yue Ren who used as a pseudonym the name of an ancient, mythical doctor called Bian Que. However, like the *Nei Jing*, the date of compilation of the *Nan Jing* is a subject of controversy. Its date is put by some authors as late as 600 AD. The best discussion of the origin of the *Nan Jing* is in Unschuld's “Nan Ching - The Classic of Difficult Issues”.²

The *Nan Jing* is a gem of a book, in its Chinese edition a very thin and small book full of clinical insights. The attraction of the book for me is that, unlike the *Nei Jing*, it clearly seems to have been written by one author because there is quite a logical progression among chapters.

The *Nan Jing* consists of 81 short chapters. The importance of the *Nan Jing* in the history of Chinese medicine cannot be overestimated. For example, the *Nan Jing* was the first text to advocate taking the pulse at the radial artery: previously the pulse was taken in nine different positions of the body on the arms, legs and neck. This classic was also the first to develop the theory of the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*) and the role of the Triple Burner in relation to it.

The following is a partial list of the reasons of the importance of the *Nan Jing*:

1. It added to the knowledge of the eight extraordinary vessels compared to that of the *Nei Jing*.
2. It developed the theory of the 5 Transporting (*Shu*) points further than what is discussed in the *Nei Jing*.
3. It put forward for the first time the technique of reinforcing and reducing points according to the Mother-Child relationships within the 5-Element theory (e.g. that the Wood point tonifies the Heart channel because it pertains to Wood, the Heart pertains to Fire and Wood is the Mother of Fire).
4. It established the practice of feeling the pulse at the radial artery.

5. It developed the theory of the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*) and Gate of Life (*Ming Men*).

ESSENTIAL PRESCRIPTIONS OF THE GOLDEN CHEST (AD 220, Han dynasty)

Jin Gui Yao Lue

Written by Zhang Zhong Jing. This is a classic I also quote frequently. In the field of mental-emotional problems, it is the source of three important formulae, i.e. Ban Xia Hou Po Tang *Pinellia-Magnolia Decoction*, Gan Mai Da Zao Tang *Glycyrrhiza-Triticum-Jujuba Decoction* and Bai He Tang *Lilium Decoction*.

THE PULSE CLASSIC (AD 280, Three Kingdoms Period)

Mai Jing

Written by Wang Shu He. The Pulse Classic is very important in the development of pulse diagnosis. This classic consolidated and further developed the assignment of the three pulse positions to organs, first done by the *Nan Jing*. The Pulse Classic describes 24 pulse qualities and their clinical significance systematically.

DISCUSSION OF THE ORIGIN OF SYMPTOMS IN DISEASES (AD 610, Sui dynasty)

Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun

Written by Chao Yuan Fang. This book is one of the first books describing the symptoms, patterns and treatment of diseases systematically. I consult this book when researching the pathology and treatment of a particular condition.

THOUSAND GOLDEN DUCATS PRESCRIPTIONS (AD 652, Tang dynasty)

Qian Jin Yao Fang

Written by Sun Si Miao. This book is one of the few to bear a Buddhist influence. Sun Si Miao was an expert on diet and sexuality. He was one of the first doctors to

describe goitre and correctly attribute it to living in mountainous regions (with water deprived of iodine); he correctly prescribed the use of seaweeds to treat this condition.

In my mind, Sun Si Miao is forever linked to the formulation of the prescription *Wen Dan Tang Warming the Gall-Bladder Decoction* which I use extensively in the treatment of mental-emotional conditions.

DISCUSSION ON STOMACH AND SPLEEN (1249, Song dynasty)

Pi Wei Lun

Written by Li Dong Yuan. The Discussion on Stomach and Spleen is a very important classic in the history of Chinese medicine. Li Dong Yuan is the founder of the School of Stomach and Spleen which attributes a central importance to the Stomach and Spleen in pathology and treatment.

In my mind, the importance of this classic lies especially in the formulation of the prescription *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction*. This is a very important prescription for many different conditions and, in mental-emotional problems, I use it for depression.

Li Dong Yuan was the first to formulate the theory of “Yin Fire”, a condition characterized by Heat above deriving from a deficiency of the Stomach and Spleen and of the Original Qi (*Yuan Qi*). In my opinion, Yin Fire is a common pathology in many modern, Western diseases such as chronic fatigue syndrome.

QI JING BA MAI KAO (1578, Ming dynasty)

A Study of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels

Written by Li Shi Zhen. The importance of this book cannot be overemphasized: for anyone uses the eight extraordinary vessels, this book is a must. First, this is the first book that describes the pathways of the extraordinary vessels in detail, point by point. It also describes the pathology of rebellious Qi of the Penetrating Vessel (*Chong Mai*) which is so common in practice.

I have consulted and quoted this book extensively when writing the Channels of Acupuncture.

A STUDY OF THE PULSE BY THE PIN HU LAKE MASTER (1578, Ming dynasty)

Pin Hu Mai Xue

Written by Li Shi Zhen. This is another must to understand pulse diagnosis. Li Shi Zhen gives the best description of the pulse qualities and their clinical significance.

COMPENDIUM OF ACUPUNCTURE (1601, Ming dynasty)

Zhen Jiu Da Cheng

Written by Yang Ji Zhou. This book is a must for acupuncturists. It occupies a fundamental place in the acupuncture literature for several reasons:

1. It summarized the acupuncture experience of previous centuries.
2. It describes many different needling techniques many of which are used today.
3. It dealt with internal medicine, gynaecology and pediatrics.
4. It has many case histories with point prescriptions.
5. It uses the identification of patterns with point prescriptions.
6. It introduced massage therapy for children.

I have used this book extensively when writing the Channels of Acupuncture.

CLASSIC OF CATEGORIES (1624, Ming dynasty)

Lei Jing

Written by Zhang Jing Yue (also called Zhang Jie Bin). This is a very important book in the history of Chinese medicine. Its importance lies in its discussion of theories from the *Nei Jing* arranged according to topics. It therefore joints together scattered passages from the *Nei Jing* according to topics and diseases.

JING YUE QUAN SHU (1624, Ming dynasty)

Complete Book of Jing Yue

Written by Zhang Jing Yue (also called Zhang Jie Bin). This book discusses the diagnosis, pathology and

treatment of many different conditions. Zhang Jing Yue formulated the prescriptions *Zuo Gui Wan Restoring the Left [Kidney] Pill* and *You Gui Wan Restoring the Right [Kidney] Pill* which tonify Kidney-Yin and Kidney-Yang respectively. I personally use these two formulae to tonify the Kidneys much more often than Liu Wei Di Huang Wan *Six Ingredients Rehmannia Pill* and Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan. *Golden Chest Kidney-Qi Pill*.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE ACUPUNCTURE POINTS (1654, Qing dynasty)

Jing Xue Jie

Written by Yue Han Zhen. This is not a famous classic but it is a gem of a book that I use extensively to consult the actions and functions of acupuncture points. The book explains the meaning of the points names and it discusses the actions and functions of points according to channel affected, which is very useful. I find the book also interesting because it gives the action of the points (e.g. Spleen-12 moves Qi) which many people think it is a modern adaptation of Chinese acupuncture.

YI ZONG JIN JIAN (1742, Qing dynasty)

Golden Mirror of Medicine

Written by Wu Qian. This book discusses the diagnosis, pathology and treatment of many different diseases in

the field of internal medicine, gynaecology and pediatrics. It is a mine of information and a book that I consult frequently when writing my books.

DISCUSSION ON BLOOD PATTERNS (1884, Qing dynasty)

Xue Zheng Lun

Written by Tang Zong Hai. This is an important book for the treatment of bleeding disorders. It formulates the four-pronged approach to the treatment of bleeding.

END NOTES

1. Unschuld P 2003 "Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen: Nature, Knowledge, Imagery in an Ancient Chinese Medical Text", University of California Press, Berkeley.
2. Unschuld P 1986 *Medicine in China - Nan-Ching*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Pinyin-English Glossary of Chinese Terms

GENERAL

<i>Ba Kuo</i> 八廓	The Eight Ramparts	<i>Liu Yin</i> 六淫	Six Excesses (excessive climates)
<i>Bao Luo</i> 胞络	Uterus channel	<i>Mu Xi</i> 目系	Eye System
<i>Bao Mai</i> 胞脉	Uterus vessel	<i>Rou</i> 肉	Muscles or flesh
<i>Bian Zheng</i> 辨证	Identification of patterns	<i>Shan Zhong</i> 膻中	Centre of the Thorax
<i>Cou Li</i> 腠里	Spaces and texture (also space between the skin and muscles)	<i>Shao Fu</i> 少腹	Lateral-lower abdominal area
<i>Cun</i> 寸	Cun (acupuncture unit of measurement)	<i>Wu Lun</i> 五轮	The Five Wheels
<i>Dan Tian</i> 丹田	Field of Elixir	<i>Xiang</i> 象	Image
<i>Fen Rou</i> 分肉	Fat and Muscles	<i>Xiao Fu</i> 小腹	Central-lower abdominal area
<i>Fu</i>	Superficial layer of skin	<i>Xie</i> 邪	Pathogenic factor
<i>Gao</i> 膏	Fat tissue	<i>Xie Lei</i> 胁肋	Hypochondrium
<i>Ge</i> 革	Deep layer of skin	<i>Xie Qi</i> 邪气	Pathogenic factor
<i>Huang</i> 育	Membranes	<i>Xin xia</i> 心下	Area below the xiphoid process
<i>Ji</i> 肌	Subcutaneous muscles	<i>Xu Li</i> 虚里	Great Connecting channel of the Stomach (manifesting in apical pulse)
<i>Jie</i> 街	'Streets,' 'avenues,' 'crossroads,' symbols for channels of the abdomen controlled by the Penetrating Vessel	<i>Xuan Fa</i> 宣发	Diffusing (of Lung-Qi)
<i>Jin</i> 筋	Sinews	<i>Xuan Fu</i> 玄府	Pores (including sebaceous glands)
<i>Liu Qi</i> 六气	Six Climates	<i>Yun Hua</i> 运化	Transformation and transportation (of the Spleen)
<i>Liu Xie</i> 六邪	Six Evils (external pathogenic factors)	<i>Zong Jin</i> 宗筋	Ancestral muscles

SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS

<i>Ban</i> 斑	Macule (in tongue diagnosis, red spots)	<i>Ju</i> 聚	Qi masses
<i>Ban Shen Bu Sui</i> 半身不遂	Hemiplegia	<i>Jue</i> 厥	Breakdown
<i>Ben</i> 本	Root	<i>Jue Han</i> 厥汗	Sweating from breakdown
<i>Bi Yuan</i> 鼻渊	'Nose pool' (sinusitis)	<i>Kou Chuang</i> 口瘡	Mouth ulcers
<i>Biao</i> 标	Manifestation	<i>Kou Yan Wai Xie</i> 口眼歪斜	Deviation of eye and mouth
<i>Cao Za</i> 嘈杂	Gnawing hunger	<i>Li Ji</i> 里急	Internal urgency (or tension of lining)
<i>Chuan</i> 喘	Breathlessness	<i>Li Ji Hou Zhong</i> 里急后重	Difficulty in defecation
<i>Dao Han</i> 盗汗	Night-sweating	<i>Liu Lei</i> 流泪	Streaming eyes
<i>Dian</i> 点	Red points (on the tongue)	<i>Ma Mu</i> 麻木	Numbness and/or tingling
<i>Duan Qi</i> 短气	Shortness of breath	<i>Ma Zhen</i> 麻疹	Hemp rash (measles)
<i>Duo Qi</i> 夺气	Robbing of Qi (very feeble voice with interrupted speech)	<i>Man</i> 满	Feeling of fullness
<i>E Xin</i> 恶心	Nausea	<i>Men</i> 闷	Feeling of oppression
<i>Fa Re</i> 发热	Emission of heat, fever	<i>Mu Chan</i> 目颤	Quivering eyeball
<i>Fan Wei</i> 反胃	Regurgitation of food	<i>Mu Hua</i> 目花	Floaters
<i>Fan Zao</i> 烦躁	Mental restlessness	<i>Mu Hun</i> 目昏	Blurred vision
<i>Feng Tuan</i> 风团	Wheal	<i>Mu Xuan</i> 目眩	Blurred vision
<i>Feng Yin Zhen</i> 风瘾疹	Wind hidden rash (urticaria)	<i>Nao Ming</i> 腦鸣	Brain noise
<i>Feng Zhen</i> 风疹	Wind rash (German measles)	<i>Ni</i> 膩	Sticky (tongue coating)
<i>Fu</i> 腐	Mouldy	<i>Ni Jing</i> 逆经	Reverse period
<i>Gan Ou</i> 干呕	Short retching with low sound	<i>Nong Pao</i> 脓泡	Pustule
<i>Han Re Wang Lai</i> 寒热往来	Alternation of chills and fever	<i>Ou</i> 呕	Vomiting (with sound)
<i>Han Zhan</i> 汗颤	Shivers	<i>Ou Tu</i> 呕吐	Vomiting
<i>Hu Re</i> 湖热	Tidal fever	<i>Pao</i> 泡	Vesicle
<i>Hua</i> 滑	Slippery (tongue coating)	<i>Pi</i> 痞	Feeling of stuffiness
<i>Ji</i> 积	Blood masses	<i>Qi Shao</i> 气少	Weak breathing
<i>Jia</i> 瘕	Qi masses	<i>Qi Zhong</i> 气肿	Qi oedema
<i>Jiao Qi</i> 脚气	Leg Qi	<i>Qing</i> 青	Bluish-greenish (colour)
<i>Jie</i> 结	Accumulation (or nodules)	<i>Qiu Zhen</i> 丘疹	Papule
<i>Jing Ji</i> 惊悸	Fright palpitations	<i>Re Du</i> 热毒	Toxic Heat

<i>Ru E</i> 乳蛾	Milky moth (swollen tonsils)
<i>Shang Qi</i> 上气	Rebellious-Qi breathing
<i>Shen Zhong</i> 身重	Feeling of heaviness of the body
<i>Shi</i> 实	Full, Fullness, Excess
<i>Shi E</i> 石蛾	Stone moth (swollen tonsils)
<i>Shi Zhen</i> 湿疹	Eczema
<i>Shou Chan</i> 手颤	Tremor of the hands
<i>Shou Zhi Luan</i> 手指挛	Contraction of the fingers
<i>Shui Dou</i> 水痘	Water pox (chickenpox)
<i>Shui Pao</i> 水泡	Vesicle
<i>Shui Zhong</i> 水肿	Water oedema
<i>Si Ni</i> 四逆	Four Rebellious
<i>Tai Qi Shang Ni</i> 胎气上逆	Foetus = Qi rebelling upwards
<i>Tan He</i> 痰核	Nodules
<i>Tan Yin</i> 痰饮	Phlegm-Fluids (or Phlegm-Fluids in Stomach and Intestines)
<i>Tou Zhong</i> 头重	Feeling of heaviness of the head
<i>Tou Fa Bian Bai</i> 头发变白	Greying of the hair
<i>Tou Fa Tuo Luo</i> 头发脱落	Alopecia
<i>Tou Qing</i> 头倾	Drooping head
<i>Tou Yun</i> 头晕	Dizziness
<i>Tu</i> 吐	Vomiting (without sound)
<i>Tuo</i> 脱	Collapse
<i>Wei Han</i> 畏寒	Fear of cold (in exterior invasions of Wind)
<i>Wu Chi</i> 五迟	Five Retardations

<i>Wu Feng</i> 恶风	Aversion to wind
<i>Wu Han</i> 恶寒	Aversion to cold
<i>Wu Han Fa Re</i> 恶寒发热	(Simultaneous) Aversion to cold and fever
<i>Wu Ruan</i> 五软	Five Flaccidities
<i>Wu Xin Fa Re</i> 五心发热	Five-palm heat
<i>Xiao</i> 哮	Wheezing
<i>Xin Fan</i> 心烦	Mental restlessness
<i>Xin Zhong Ao Nong</i> 心中懊	Heart feeling vexed
<i>Xu</i> 虚	Empty, Emptiness, Deficiency
<i>Xuan Yin</i> 玄饮	Phlegm-Fluids in the hypochondrium
<i>Xuan Yun</i> 眩晕	Dizziness
<i>Yan Chi</i> 眼眵	Discharge from the eyes
<i>Yan Shi</i> 厌食	Aversion to food
<i>Yi Yin</i> 溢饮	Phlegm-Fluids in the limbs
<i>Yu Zheng</i> 郁症	Depression
<i>Yue</i> 嘔	Long retching with loud sound
<i>Zhan Han</i> 颤汗	Shiver sweating
<i>Zhang</i> 胀	Feeling of distension
<i>Zhen</i> 疹	Rash
<i>Zheng</i> 瘰	Blood masses
<i>Zheng Chong</i> 怔忡	Panic palpitations
<i>Zhi Yin</i> 支饮	Phlegm-Fluids above the diaphragm
<i>Zu Chan</i> 足颤	Tremor of the feet

DISEASE-SYMPTOMS

<i>Ben Tun</i> 奔豚	Running Piglet Syndrome	<i>Shi Lin</i> 石淋	Stone Painful-Urination Syndrome
<i>Beng Lou</i> 崩漏	Flooding and trickling	<i>Shi Zhen</i> 湿疹	Eczema (dermatitis)
<i>Bi Jing</i> 闭经	No periods	<i>Shui Dou</i> 水痘	Chickenpox
<i>Bi Zheng</i> 痹症	Painful Obstruction Syndrome	<i>Tan He</i> 痰核	Nodules
<i>Dian Kuang</i> 癫狂	Manic depression	<i>Tan Huan</i> 瘫痪	Paralysis
<i>Dian Xian</i> 癫痫	Epilepsy	<i>Wei Zheng</i> 痿症	Atrophy Syndrome
<i>Fei Xu Lao</i> 肺虚劳	Lung Exhaustion	<i>Wen Bing</i> 温病	Warm disease
<i>Feng Zhen</i> 风疹	German measles	<i>Wen Yi</i> 瘟疫	Warm epidemic pathogenic factor
<i>Gan</i> 疳	Childhood Nutritional Impairment	<i>Wu Chi</i> 五迟	Five Retardations
<i>Gao Lin</i> 膏淋	Sticky Painful-Urination Syndrome	<i>Wu Ruan</i> 五软	Five Flaccidities
<i>Ji Dai</i> 积滞	Accumulation Disorder (in children)	<i>Xu Lao</i> 虚劳	Exhaustion
<i>Ji Ju</i> 积聚	Abdominal masses	<i>Xu Sun</i> 虚损	Exhaustion
<i>Jing Jian Qi Chu Xue</i> 经间期出血	Bleeding between periods	<i>Xue Lin</i> 血淋	Blood Painful-Urination Syndrome
<i>Jue Zheng</i> 厥症	Breakdown Syndrome	<i>Ye Ge</i> 噎膈	Diaphragm choking
<i>Lao Lin</i> 劳淋	Fatigue Painful-Urination Syndrome	<i>Yin Zhen</i> 瘾疹	Urticaria
<i>Li Ji</i> 痢疾	Dysentery	<i>Ying</i> 瘰	Goitre
<i>Lin Zheng</i> 淋症	Painful Urination Syndrome	<i>Yu Zheng</i> 郁症	Depression pattern
<i>Luo Li</i> 瘰癧	Scrofula	<i>Yue Jing Guo Duo</i> 月经过多	Heavy periods
<i>Ma Zhen</i> 麻疹	Measles	<i>Yue Jing Guo Shao</i> 月经过少	Scanty periods
<i>Mian Tan</i> 面瘫	Facial paralysis	<i>Yue Jing Hou Qi</i> 月经后期	Late periods
<i>Nue Ji</i> 疟疾	Malaria	<i>Yue Jing Xian Hou Wu Ding Qi</i> 月经先后无定期	Irregular periods
<i>Pi Kuai</i> 痞块	Pi masses	<i>Yue Jing Xian Qi</i> 月经先其	Early periods
<i>Qi Lin</i> 气淋	Qi Painful-Urination Syndrome	<i>Zheng Jia</i> 瘕瘕	Abdominal masses (in women)
<i>Re Lin</i> 热淋	Heat Painful-Urination Syndrome	<i>Zhong Feng</i> 中风	Wind-stroke
<i>Ru Pi</i> 乳癖	Breast lumps	<i>Zi Lin</i> 子淋	Painful-urination pregnancy
<i>Shan</i> 疝	Hernial and Genito-Urinary Disorders	<i>Zi Yun</i> 子晕	Dizziness of pregnancy
		<i>Zi Zhong</i> 子肿	Oedema of pregnancy

VITAL SUBSTANCES

<i>Hou Tian Zhi Qi</i> 后天之	Postnatal Qi	<i>Wei Qi</i> 卫气	Defensive Qi
<i>Hun</i> 魂	Ethereal Soul	<i>Xian</i> 涎	Saliva
<i>Jing</i> 精	Essence	<i>Xian Tian Zhi Qi</i> 先天之气	Prenatal Qi
<i>Jun Huo</i> 君火	Emperor Fire	<i>Xiang Huo</i> 相火	Minister Fire
<i>Ming Men</i> 命门	Gate of Life	<i>Yi</i> 意	Intellect
<i>Ming Men Huo</i> 命门火	Fire of the Gate of Life	<i>Ying Qi</i> 营气	Nutritive Qi
<i>Po</i> 魄	Corporeal Soul	<i>Yuan Qi</i> 原气	Original Qi
<i>Shao Huo</i> 少火	Physiological Fire of the body	<i>Zhen Qi</i> 真气	True Qi
<i>Shen</i> 神	Mind (the Shen of the Heart) or Spirit (the complex of Heart-Shen, Corporeal Soul, Ethereal Soul, intellect and will-power)	<i>Zheng Qi</i> 正气	Upright Qi
<i>Tian Gui</i> 天癸	Heavenly Gui	<i>Zhi</i> 志	Will-power
<i>Tuo</i> 唾	Spittle	<i>Zhong Qi</i> 中气	Central Qi
		<i>Zhuang Huo</i> 壮火	Exuberant Fire (pathological)
		<i>Zong Qi</i> 宗气	Gathering Qi (of the chest)

EMOTIONS

<i>Bei</i> 悲	Sadness	<i>Si</i> 思	Pensiveness
<i>Jing</i> 惊	Shock	<i>Xi</i> 喜	Joy
<i>Kong</i> 恐	Fear	<i>You</i> 忧	Worry
<i>Nu</i> 怒	Anger		

CHANNELS AND POINTS

<i>Bao Luo</i> 胞络	Uterus channel	<i>Ren Mai</i> 任脉	Directing Vessel
<i>Bao Mai</i> 胞脉	Uterus vessel	<i>Shao Yang</i> 少阳	Lesser Yang
<i>Chong Mai</i> 冲脉	Penetrating Vessel	<i>Shao Yin</i> 少阴	Lesser Yin
<i>Cou Li</i> 腠里	Space between skin and muscles	<i>Shu Xue</i> 输穴	Stream point
<i>Dai Mai</i> 带脉	Girdle Vessel	<i>(Bei) Shu Xue</i> 背俞穴	Back-Transporting points
<i>Du Mai</i> 督脉	Governing Vessel	<i>Sun Luo</i> 孙络	Minute Connecting channel
<i>Fu Luo</i> 浮络	Superficial Connecting channel	<i>Tai Yang</i> 太阳	Greater Yang
<i>He Xue</i> 合穴	Sea point	<i>Tai Yin</i> 太阴	Greater Yin
<i>Hui Xue</i> 会穴	Gathering point	<i>Wu Shu Xue</i> 五输穴	Five Transporting points
<i>Jing Xue</i> 井穴	Well point	<i>Xi Xue</i> 郄穴	Accumulation point
<i>Jing Xue</i> 经穴	River point	<i>Yang Ming</i> 阳明	Bright Yang
<i>Jing Bie</i> 经别	Divergent channel	<i>Yang Qiao Mai</i> 阳跷脉	Yang Stepping Vessel
<i>Jing Jin</i> 经筋	Muscle channel	<i>Yang Wei Mai</i> 阳维脉	Yang Linking Vessel
<i>Jing Mai</i> 经脉	Main channel	<i>Yin Qiao Mai</i> 阴跷脉	Yin Stepping Vessel
<i>Jue Yin</i> 厥阴	Terminal Yin	<i>Yin Wei Mai</i> 阴维脉	Yin Linking Vessel
<i>Luo Mai (Xue)</i> 络脉 (穴)	Connecting channel	<i>Ying Xue</i> 荣穴	Spring point
<i>Luo Xue</i> 络穴	Connecting point	<i>Yuan Xue</i> 原穴	Source point
<i>Mu Xue</i> 募穴	Front-Collecting points		

PULSE POSITIONS

<i>Chi</i> 尺	Rear (pulse position)
<i>Cun</i> 寸	Front (pulse position)
<i>Guan</i> 关	Middle (pulse position)

PULSE QUALITIES

<i>Chang</i> 长	Long	<i>Jie</i> 结	Knotted
<i>Chen</i> 沉	Deep	<i>Jin</i> 紧	Tight
<i>Chi</i> 迟	Slow	<i>Kou</i> 芤	Hollow
<i>Cu</i> 促	Hasty	<i>Lao</i> 牢	Firm
<i>Da</i> 大	Big	<i>Ru</i> 濡	Soggy
<i>Dai</i> 代	Irregular or Intermittent	<i>Ruo</i> 弱	Weak
<i>Dong</i> 动	Moving	<i>San</i> 散	Scattered
<i>Duan</i> 短	Short	<i>Se</i> 涩	Choppy
<i>Fu</i> 浮	Floating	<i>Shi</i> 实	Full
<i>Fu</i> 伏	Hidden	<i>Shu</i> 数	Rapid
<i>Ge</i> 革	Leather	<i>Wei</i> 微	Minute
<i>Hong</i> 洪	Overflowing	<i>Xi</i> 细	Fine
<i>Hua</i> 滑	Slippery	<i>Xian</i> 弦	Wiry
<i>Huan</i> 缓	Slowed-down	<i>Xu</i> 虚	Empty
<i>Ji</i> 急	Hurried		

METHODS OF TREATMENT

<i>An Tai</i> 安胎	Calm the Foetus	<i>San Han</i> 散寒	Expel Cold
<i>Bu</i> 补	Tonify (or reinforce as a needle technique)	<i>San Jie</i> 散结	Dissipate accumulation or dissipate nodules
<i>Gong Yu</i> 功瘀	Dispel stasis (of Blood)	<i>Sheng Xin</i> 生新	Promote healing of tissues
<i>Gu</i> 固	Consolidate	<i>Shu (Gan)</i> 疏肝	Pacify (the Liver)
<i>Gu Biao</i> 固表	Consolidate the Exterior	<i>Shu Jin</i> 舒筋	Relax the sinews
<i>Gu Tuo</i> 固脱	Consolidate Collapse	<i>Tiao He Ying Wei</i> 调和营卫	Harmonize Nutritive and Defensive Qi
<i>Hua Shi</i> 化湿	Resolve Dampness	<i>Tiao Jing</i> 调经	Regulate the period
<i>Hua Tan</i> 化痰	Resolve Phlegm	<i>Tong Luo</i> 通络	Remove obstructions from the Connecting channels
<i>Hua Y</i> 化瘀	Eliminate stasis (of Blood)	<i>Tong Qiao</i> 通窍	Open the orifices
<i>Huan Ji</i> 缓急	Moderate urgency	<i>Tong Ru</i> 通乳络	Remove obstructions from the breast's Connecting channels
<i>Huo Xue</i> 活血	Invigorate Blood	<i>Tong Yang</i> 通畅(胸)	Open (the chest)
<i>Jie (Biao)</i> 解表	Release (the Exterior)	<i>Wen Jing</i> 温经	Warm the menses
<i>Jie Yu</i> 解郁	Eliminate stagnation (of Qi)	<i>Xi Feng</i> 熄风	Extinguish Wind (internal)
<i>Kai Qiao</i> 开窍	Open the orifices	<i>Xie</i> 泻	Reduce (as a needle technique)
<i>Li Hou</i> 利喉	Benefit the throat	<i>Xie</i> 泄	Clear (Heat)
<i>Li Mu</i> 利目	Brighten the eyes	<i>Xie</i> 泻	Drain (Fire)
<i>Li Qi</i> 理气	Move Qi	<i>Xie</i> 泻	Drain (method of treatment as opposed to <i>Bu</i> 补, tonify)
<i>Li Shi</i> 利湿	Resolve Dampness	<i>Xie Xia</i> 泻下	Move downwards
<i>Li Shui</i> 利水	Transform Water	<i>Xin Kai Ku Jiang</i> 辛开苦降	Use pungent herbs to open and bitter ones to make Qi descend
<i>Li Shui Dao</i> 理水道	Regulate the Water passages	<i>Xing Zhi</i> 醒志	Promote resuscitation
<i>Liu Wei</i> 疏卫	Circulate Defensive Qi	<i>Xuan Fei</i> 宣肺	Restore the diffusing of Lung-Qi
<i>Ping Gan</i> 平肝	Calm the Liver	<i>Xuan Tong Bi</i> 宣通鼻窍	Open the nose
<i>Po Xue</i> 破血	Break-up Blood	<i>Yang (Xue)</i> 养血	Nourish (Blood)
<i>Qing (Re)</i> 清热	Clear Heat		
<i>Qu (Feng)</i> 去风	Expel (external Wind)		
<i>Qu Yu</i> 去瘀	Eliminate stasis (of Blood)		

PATHOGENIC FACTORS

<i>Feng Han</i> 风寒	Wind-Cold	<i>Tan Yin</i> 痰饮	Phlegm-Fluids in general and also Phlegm-Fluids in the Stomach
<i>Feng Re</i> 风热	Wind-Heat	<i>Wen Yi</i>	Warm epidemic pathogenic factor
<i>Han</i> 寒	Cold	<i>Xie</i> 邪	Pathogenic factor
<i>Huo</i> 火	Fire	<i>Xie Qi</i> 邪气	Pathogenic factor
<i>Re</i> 热	Heat	<i>Xuan Yin</i> 悬饮	Phlegm-Fluids in the hypochondrium
<i>Re Du</i> 热毒	Toxic Heat	<i>Yi Yin</i> 溢饮	Phlegm-Fluids in the limbs
<i>Shi</i> 湿	Dampness	<i>Zao</i> 燥	Dryness
<i>Shu</i> 暑	Summer-Heat	<i>Zhi Yin</i> 支饮	Phlegm-Fluids in the diaphragm
<i>Tan</i> 痰	Phlegm		

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Chinese Chronology

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Zhou: 11th century to 771 BC
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Han: 206 BC–220 AD
Three Kingdoms period: 220–280 AD
Jin: 265–420
Northern and Southern dynasties: 420–581
Sui: 581–618

Tang: 618–907
Five dynasties: 907–960
Song: 960–1279
Liao: 906–1125
Jin: 1115–1234
Yuan: 1271–1368
Ming: 1368–1644
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